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TANTRA

by
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Meaning of Tantra

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Among the various meanings of 'Tantra', found in lexicons the following may be noted: *siddhánta* (conclusion), *srutisákhá* (a branch of *sruti,* i.e., Vedas), *itikartavyatá* (set of duties), *prbbandha* (composition), *sástravisesa* (a particular *sástra*).

'Tantra' is sometimes used to denote governance. Kálidása uses the expression *'prajah tantrayiva'* (having governed the subjects) in the *Abhinanasakuntalam* (V. 5).

In the Vedas (e.g., *Rgveda* X. 71.9, *Atharvaveda* X. 7.42) 'tantra' appears to be used to denote a weaving machine, a loom. The same sense of the word is found also in the *Taittiriya Bráhmana* (11.5.5.3). The word *tantraka* occurs in the *Astádhyáyi* as a derivative of the *tantra,* and means a cloth taken from the loom.

In the *Satapatha Bráhmana* and *Tándya Bráhmana,* 'tantra' denotes the chief portion or the essence of a thing. Perhaps, in that age, Tantra was considered to represent the quintessence of Sastras.

The term 'tantra' has been used at several places to denote a system of thought, a set of doctrines, etc., e.g., *Kapilasya Tantra* (i.e., Sámkhya), used by Samkara. The word 'tantra' is used by Bhaskara Raya to denote Mimámsá-sástra, etc.

Tantra, when denoting a kind of Sástra, stands for a set of doctrines, practices, mystic syllables, metaphysical speculations, magic, etc.

'Tantra' is derived from the root *tan* to spread. *Tanyate vistaryáte jnáñam anena* — knowledge is increased by it. In this sense, any branch of knowledge is called Tantra, e.g., Sámkhya and Nyáya philosophical systems are called respectively *Kapila-tantra, Gotama-tantra.* The Àyurvedic work, attributed to Agnivesa, is called *Agnivesa-tantra.* 'Tantra', derived from the same root, is taken by some to denote a Sástra which dilates

upon *tattvas* and *mantras*.

According to H. P. Sástrì, *Tantra* means shortening. It attempts to reduce, to something like algebraic forms, *mantras* which would otherwise be very long.

Some derive *Tantra* from *tanu* (body). Tantra is so called as it saves the body by Yogic practices.

Other derive that word from root *trai* (to save), and take *tantra* to denote that Sástra which gives protection to its followers.

Another way of deriving 'Tantra' is from the root *tantri* (to explain) or *tatri* (to understand). In the *Ísánagurudeva-paddhati*, Tantra is taken to denote the Sástra which expounds the six categories of Saivism, viz., *Pasu, Pása, Pati, Sakti, Vicára, Kriyácára*.

Classification of Tantras

Tantras are classified in various ways. The Tántric works of the Vaisnavas, Saìvas and Sáktas are called respectively *Samhitá, Ȧgama* and *Tantra;* these terms mean respectively collection, tradition and a set of doctrines or a book. In some cases, these terms are used promiscuously.

Tántric works are also classified as *Ȧgama* and *Nigama*. The works, in which Párvátì asks questions like a pupil, and Siva answers like a teacher, are called *Ȧgama*. Those, in which the process is reversed, are designated as *Nigama*.

Tantras are again classified as *Visnuakránta, Rathakránta* and *Asvakránta* or *Gajakranta* in accordance with the places of their origin.[1]

Sixty-four Tantras are believed to belong to each of these regions.[2]

According to tradition, Tantras are divided into two categories, viz. — *Sadágama* and *Asadagama*. There is difference of opinion about which of the works are *Sat* and which *Asat*. The main criterion is that when the objective is worship in conformity

with practice or custom, the work concerned is *Sat;* otherwise a work is *Asat*.

Tantras are also classified as *Ȧstika* (Vedic) and *Nástika* (non-Vedic). The works of the former class are divided, according to the predominance of the deity, as *Sákta, Saiva, Saura, Gánapatya* and *Vaisnava*.

The Sákta Tantras are divided into ten classes in accordance with the names of ten *Mahávidyás*. Of these, the *Sodasì-tantra* is known as *Srividyá*.

Another mode of classification is into *Srotas, Pitha* and *Ȧmnáya*.[3]

Tantras are also classified into *Kádi, Hádi* and *Kahádi* or *Sadi*[4]. This classification appears to have been in accordance with the initial letters of *mantras*. The *mantra* having *Ka* as the initial syllable is *Kádi*, that with *Ha* as the initial letter is *Hádi*, and that beginning with the union of *Kádi* and *Hádi* is *Kahádi*.

Sakti is supposed to be inherent in Siva as the property of burning inheres in fire.

The following five faces of Siva are taken as representing the five functions of *Sakti*, in the spheres noted against them:

Isána — *Cit* (consciousness),

Tatpurusa — *Ȧnanda* (bliss),

Sadyojyoti — *Icchá* (will),

Vámadeva — *Jñána* (knowledge),

Aghora — *Kriyá* (action).

The five mouths of Siva are said to have originally produced ten *Ȧgamas*, viz., *Kámika, Yogaja, Cintya, Mukuta, Amsumán, Dipta, Ajita, Súksma, Sahasra, Suprabheda*.

These, in their turn, led to the composition of the following eighteen Raudra Ȧgamas:

Vijaya, Nihsvasa (or, *Prodgita*) *Paramesvara, Mukhabimba, Siddha, Santana, Narasimha, Candramsu*, (or, *Candrahasa*),

Virabhadra (or, *Bhadra*), *Agneya, Svayambhu, Visara* (or, *Virakta*), *Raurava* (or, *Rauravya*), *Vimala* (or, *Mukuta*), *Kirana, Lalita, Saumeya* (or, *Para*).

The above two classes together constitute the twenty-eight Saiva Àgamas.

Another tradition makes the *Daksina Mukha* of Siva represent non-duality; it is called *Yogini-vaktra*. The other four faces are stated to represent the four conditions, viz., Denotative, Denoted, Extinguishing and Extinguished. The works, produced by these, together constitute the 64 *Bhairava Àgamas* classified into the following octads:

1. Bhairavástaka: *Svacchanda, Bhairava, Canda, Krodha, Unmatta, Asitáñga, Mahocchúsma, Kankálisa.*
2. Yámalástaka : *Brahmá, Visnu, Atharvan, Ruru, Vetála, Indra, Svacchanda.*

Again, Tantras are divided into Hindu and non-Hindu. Those of the latter class are Buddhist and Jaina. Buddhist Tantras are divided, according to the three broad divisions of later Buddhism, as *vajrayána, Sahajayána* and *Kálacakryána*. There is a sectarian classification of Jaina Tantras too. Both Buddhist and Jaina Tantras belong to the *Nástika* class, mentioned above.

A mode of classification is based on the mythological ages; e.g., *varahakalpa, Kálakalpa, etc.*

The *Váráhitantra* mentions a class of works called *Upatantra*. There is a tradition (e.g., *Brahmayamala*, Ch. XXXIX Srotonirnaya *Section*) of classifying Tantric works as *Daksina, Váma* and *Madhyama*, also called *Divya, Kaula*, and *Vama*, each being sub-divided as *Harda* (inner) and *Báhya* (outer).

A division into *Astaka, Mañgala, Cakra* and *Sikhá* is also found (*Jayadratha-Yámala*, 1.47).

A class of Tantras is called Yámala. Besides the well-known *Rudrayámala*, there are Yámalas associated with Ganesa, Visnu, Sakti and several others.

In another way, Tantras are divided into two classes, viz., *Kálikula* and *Srìkula*.

Some divide Tantric works into the following four broad classes:

A. Àgama

Narrator Siva, listener Párvati, approved by Vásudeva. Its contents are usually as follows:- *Srsti, Pralaya, Devárcaná, Purascanrana, Satkarma, Dhyánayoga.*

B. Dámara

Narrated by Siva. Six kinds of Dámara are *Yoga, Siva, Durgá, Sarasvatá, Brahmá, Gandharava.*

C. Yamala (lit. meaning pair, couple)

Six, viz, *Brahmá, Visnu, Rudra, Ganesa, Ravi, Àditya.*

General contents : *Jyotisa, Àkhyána, Nitya Karma, Kramasútra, Varnabheda, Jatibheda, Yugadharma.*

D. Tantra

Sáktas'astra. Also called *Nigama, Rahasya, Samhitá, Arnava, etc.* General Contents : *Sarga, Pratisarga, Devatá-samsthána, Tirthavarnana, Às'rama-dharma, Yantra-nirnaya, Jyotis, Puránákhyána, Kosa-varnana, Vrata-vivarana, Saucas'auca, Naraka, Stri-purusa-laksana, Rajadharma, Dana, Yugadharma,* etc.

Sáktatantras are by far the most well-known.

Antiquity and continuity of Tantra

It is not known precisely when Tantra originated. It is given

the status of *Sruti* in some works. It is stated by Hárita, as quoted in Kallúkabhatta's commentary on Manu (ii. I), as follows :

Srutisca dvividhá prokta vaidikì tantriki tathá.

The earliest record of Tántric elements is the *Atharvaveda.* In this Veda, we find, *inter alia, ábhicárika* practices designed to cause mischief to others. There are other elements of white and black magic. These foreshadow the Tantras.

The mystic sound *phat,* so familiar in Tantra, occur in the *Vájasaneyì Samhita.* In the *Àpastamba Srautasútra, phat* is used in offering Soma stalks in *abhicára.*

The number of extant Tantras is large. It may be presumed that several centuries elapsed before the Tantras grew into a huge bulk.

Manuscripts of some Tantras reveal palaography of the Gupta Age.[5] The oldest of them is the *Kubjikámata* preserved in Asiatic Society, Calcutta. The South Indian Saiva Àgamas are mentioned in an inscription of Rájasimhavarman, dating back to the sixth century A.D. in Kailásanátha Temple.

At least four Tantras, viz., *Sirascheda, Vinásikha, Sammoha* and *Nayottara* are known from the inscription of Sdok-kak-Thom, to have been introduced into Kambuja (Cambodia) about 800 A.D. by a Brahmin.

The oldest Buddhist *Dhárants* of Tántric character may, perhaps, be supposed to date from the 4th century A.D.

Tibetan translation only is available of the Buddhist Tántric works by several Bengali scholars including Sántaraksita (705-762 A.D.) and Atisa Dipamkara who are known to have settled in Tibet.

The earliest Nepalese manuscripts of Tantras appear to have been copied between the seventh and the ninth centuries. The later portions of the *Mahábhárata,* though referring to *Itihása, Purána,* are silent about Tantra. None of the well-known Chinese travellers, Fa-hien (401-410), Hiuen Tsang (630-643) and Itsing (675), refers to Tantra.

G. Tucci thinks[6] that Tantras hark back to the times of Harivarman and Asanga (4th. cent. A.D.). His opinion is based on the fact that they allude to a *Somasiddhánta* which he identifies with the Tántric sect of the Kápálikas. Winternitz, however, does not accept Tucci's view. No Buddhist Tantra appears to have existed before 650 A.D.[7]

The first clear reference to Tántric literature appears to occur in the *Bhágavata-purána* (not later than 800 A.D., according to some). These reasons led some scholars to conclude that Tantra did not originate probably earlier than the fifth or sixth century A.D. It may be pointed out that the *Devipurána,* a Bengal work of about the seventh century A.D., reveals deep influence of Tantra.

Those, who advocate a high antiquity of Tantra, hold that, in the stanzas of the *Devisúkta* (*Rgveda* **x.** 125) there are covert references to Durgádevì who represents the earlier form of Sakti or Kálì, the principal goddess of Tantra. It is also pointed out that the *Ratrisukta* (*Rgveda* **x.** 127) refers to Durgá. Some think that Rátri is the precursor of Kali. According to others, this *Súkta* is a supplement (*Khila*)interpolated into the *Rgveda.*

It is also pointed out that the *Márkandeya* and *Lingapuanas* reveal Tántric influence. The oldest part of the former, according to Pargiter, may date back to the third century B.C. or even earlier.

Samkarácárya (C. 8th cent.) has accepted Tantra as authoritative in his *Anandalahari* and *Sáktámoda.* The six *Cakras* of Tantra have been mentioned by him in his *Sárirakabhásya.*

The works of Bánabhatta (7th cent.) and Bhavabhúti (C. 7th or 8th cent.) refer to Tantric views and practices[8].

It was pointed out by Joges Vidyanidhi that the names Bráhmì and Devanágari, applied to Indian alphabet, betray Tántric influence. Bráhmi is one of the *Mátrkás* of Tantra. He thinks that, in ancient times, there was the practice of

worshipping painted symbols of the goddess. One such symbol was Devanagara (abode of god) from which *Devanágari* script was so called.

In the *Yasatilaka-campú* (Àsvása V) Bhása, who flourished earlier than Kálidásá, is stated to have said, with the Tántric *Vámácára* in view, that one should drink *sura* and put on grotesque dress.

The *Lalitavistara* of about the first century A.D. appears to refer to Tántric elements.

Among the relics of Indus Valley Civilisation, there are terracotta figures of *mátrkás* and male figures in a sitting posture. Some scholars think that, even in those pre-Vedic times, Durgá as Mother of the universe and Siva as Father used to be worshipped. Thus, the germ of Tantra was there.

B. Foote claims to have found phalli among the neolithic remains discovered by him in Deccan[9].

The Gañgádhara Stone Inscription (424 A.D.) of Visvavarman mentions *Mátrs* or Mother goddesses and Tantra.

The *Brhatsamhitá* (57. 56) of varáhamihira (C. 475-550 A.D.) mentions the group of *Mátrs*.

The *Visnupurána*, one of the earliest of the extant Puránas, speaks of the *Sakti* of Visnu. It mentions several names of Durgá, and states that, if worshipped with wine, flesh, etc., She fulfils all desires.

Whatever the date of origin of Tantra may have been, it appears from spigraphical and literary evidences that Tántric practices prevailed widely long before the sixth century A.D. It is not unreasonable to suppose that centuries elasped between the period of origin of Tántric ideas and their codification and eventual elaboration. Abundant evidence is available to prove that Tantra reached the zenith of popularity in the period between the seventh and the twelfth century A.D.

Winternitz[10] concludes that no real Tantra can be proved to have existed before the 7th century A.D. He is of the opinion

that neither the *Suvarnaprabhása* nor the *Mahámáyúrì* is a true Tantra. He comes to the conclusion that Tántric elements occur in earlier works.

The main arguments, put forward to establish a late origin of Tantra, are as follows:

(i) Tantra, as a Sástra, has not been mentioned in the famous lexicon, *Námaliñganusásana* or *Amarakosa*.

(ii) The *Sútasamhitá* (mukti-khanda) states that the customs of Pañcarátra, etc., will be beneficial to those who are fallen from the Vedic way of life. This indicates that Tantra arose long after the Veda when Vedic authority was on the wane.

(iii) The *Nátyasástra*, which, in its present form, is generally supposed to have originated about the fifth century A.D. does not mention *Nádi, Cakra* or *Náda* arising from them; this tends to prove that either Tantra did not exist before this work or was not yet established as authoritative. Ever since its inception, the Tántric faith has inspired to composition of Tántric works in some form or other; it will be evident from the chapter describing the contents of the works on Tantra. The flow of Tántric writings continued right down to the 19th. century.

In conclusion, we can say that though *Tántric works* appear to have come into being pretty long after Christ, *Tántric* beliefs and practices were part of the lives of a section of the Indian population as early as the Vedic times and even earlier.

Some scholars have pointed out that the relics of the Indus Valley Civilisation (C. 3000 B.C.) contain *Mátrká-múrtis*. They hold that *yantras, mudrás* (finger-pose), the mystic monosyllabic *Bijas* like *KLIM, KRIM*, etc., testify to the primitive pictorial writing and language consisting of single sounds. The black rites of Tantra have parallel practices in primitive times.

It seems that *Tantrácára* or Tántric practices, which form a bulk of Tantra literature, were derived from very early times. With the progress of civilisation, sophisticated philosophical speculations got into this literature. That is why we find a curious mixture of profound philosophy with the wildest superstitions

and most confused occultism, of a faultless social code of morality and rigid asceticism and a cult disfigured by wild orgies inculcating extremely reprehensible morals[11].

Original Home of Tantra

Nothing definite is known about the region where Tantra originated. Some believe that Tantras of the *Àgama* class originated in Kashmir. What is known as Tantra may have been produced, for the first time, in Bengal. This opinion is shared by Winternitz. An evidence, though not conclusive, in support of the above hypothesis is that manuscripts of *Àgamas,* written in Sáradá script, abound in Kashmir, and those of the Tantra class, in Bengali script, are available in abundance in Bengal. The works of the Samhita class are believed to have originated in different parts of India, particularly in Deccan and Bengal.

Kámákhyá[12], in Assam, is a stronghold of Tantra. It is known that Sáktism was preached there by the Bengali Sákta, Krsnaráma Nyáyavágisa. The Ahom king, Rudrasimha, became his disciple.

The Bengali Tántriks carried Tantra to the far-off Himláj in Baluchistan; the Bengali Brahmánanda and his disciple Jñánánada preached Tántric philosophy and *Sádhaná* there.

Tántric *Sádhaná* in Nepal appears to have been influenced by Bengali *Sádhakas*[13].

Tántricism in China and Tibet is believed to have owed its origin to spread of Buddhism from Bengal. Atisa Dipamkara (980-1053 A.D.) and several other scholars from Bengal went over to Tibet, settled there and wrote on Tantra.

In support of the Bengal origin of Tantra, a further evidence, pointed out by some, is that the *Mahánirvána-tantra* mentions (vi. 7.3.) three kinds of fish for use in rituals; these are found in plenty and widely consumed in Bengal[14].

An anonymous verse states that this Sástra, having originated in Gauda, developed in Mithilá, existed at some

places of Mahárástra and was destroyed in Gujarat. *Gaude pracaritá vidyá maithilaih prabalikrta/kvacit kvacin maharastre gurjare pralayam gatla/*

The Bengal work, *Pránatosinì* quotes the *Varada-tantra* (X) which is stated to contain a description of some sounds of the Nágara alphabet. From this description we learn that *h* preceding *y* is pronounced as *jh*. Again, *h* preceding *v* is pronounced as *bh*. Initiadly *y* is pronounced like *j*. These characteristics are notable in the dialects of Bengal, and, in some cases, in East Bengal.

The colophon to the *Mahákaulajñana-vinirñáya* mentions Gaudadvipa as its provenance.

The pro-Bengal theories also point out that many of the old works on Tantra, particularly Buddhist Tantra, have been found in Bengal. Moreover, the Tantric works of definitely Bengal provenance contain more of rites and rituals than of philosophy; this is a sign of their earlier origin.

Many of the Sákta Pithas are in Bengal. Though not situated in this province, the Pithas, kámarúpa, Srihatta, Oddiyana (Orissa, according to some) and Purnagiri are in the neighbourhood of Bengal.

Contents of Tantra

Traditionally Tantra deals with five topics — Creation, Dissolution, Worship, Acquisition of supernatural powers, Communion with the Supreme Being.

The *Varahi-tantra* states the contents of the different classes of Tantric works as follows:

Àgama — *srsti, pralaya, devapújá, sádhana, purascarana, satkarma, (márana, uccátana, stambhana, vasikarana, vidvesa, sánti)*

Yámala — *srsti, jyotisa, ákhyána, nityakarma, karma-sástra, varnabheda, játibheda, yugadharma.*

Tantra — *srsti, pratisrsti, tantra-nirnaya, devatákrti.*

tirtha-ásrama, Bráhmana, práni-laksana, yantra, devotpatti, kalpavrksa, jyotisa, pránákhyána, kosa, vrata, saucá-saucá, naraka, ácára, stripurusa-laksana, rájadharma, dánadharma, yugadharma, vyavaháravidhi, adhyátma-varnana, etc.

The contents of a complete Tantric work may be broadly divided as

1. *Jñána* or *Vidyá* — knowledge including philosophical and metaphysical doctrines with a monotheistic tendency and sometimes a monistic bias. This part contains occultism including a knowledge of the mystic bias. This part contains formulae and figures.
2. *Yoga* or *Upáya* — means of mind-control, especially with the object of acquiring magic-powers.
3. *Kriya* — containing instructions for making idols and for constructing and consecrating temples.
4. *Carya* or *Siddhi* — rules about rites, festivals and social duties.

This fourfold division of contents is general, but does not apply to each and every Tantric work.

As regards worship, three aspects of the deity, worshipped by a devotee, are recognised. These are *sthúla* (image), *súksma* (*mantra*) and *pará* (highest, to be apprehended by the mind alone).

Broadly speaking, the contents of Tantra literature fall into two classes, one philosophical and spiritual, the other popular and practical. The latter includes magic, *mantra, mudrá, mandala, nyasa, cakra, yantra,* etc.

The principal aim of Tantra is liberation and *Siddhi* (supernatural power).

HUMAN BODY, A MICROCOSM

Kosa

The body is supposed to consist of five *kosas* (sheaths), viz. *annamaya* (made of food), *pránamaya* (consisting of vital breath), *manomaya* (made of mind), *vijñánamaya* (consisting of special consciousness), *ánandamaya* (consisting of joy).

Nádis

The body is believed to contain three crores and a half[15] of *nadis* (arteries and veins). Of these, seventy-two are regarded as prominent. Of these again, fourteen or ten are the principal ones. Of these fourteen, the most prominent are *Idá*, *Pingalá* and *Susumná*[16].

The last and the longest one extends from *mñládhára* to *Brahmarandhra* in the head. Also called *brahmanádi*, or *moksamárga*, it is believed to contain the universe. Through it *Kundaliñi* is supposed to move upward. *Idá* is on the left side of the spinal cord. A symbol of the moon, it is white, and represents the *Amrta* aspect of Sakti. Entering *Susumná*, its exit is through the left nostril. *Pingala* is on the right side of the spinal cord. Rising from the *Múládhára*, it ends in the right nostril. Also called *Súrya Nádi*, it symbolises the waking condition, and leads persons to violence.

Cakras[17] — The body is believed to contain six *Cakras* (circle or nerve-plexus). These are as follows:

Múladhára - in the middle of the body, situated in the lowest part of the spinal cord, triangular in shape with its apex downward. It is like a red lotus with four petals. *Kundalini* is supposed to coil around it.

Svádhisthána - above the *múládhára*, but below the navle. It is like a lotus of six patals, presided over by Goddess Rakini.

Manipura - in the navel. It is like a lotus of ten petals, each petal containing a letter. Also called *Nabhicakra*, it contains a triangle of the colour of the rising sun. The outer sides of the triangle are represented by three *Svastika* symbols. It is

presided over by a goddess Lakini.

Anáháta - in the region of the heart. It is like a deep red lotus with twelve petals. Seat of air, it is presided over by goddess Kákini.

Visuddha or *Bhárati* - in the region of the neck. Seat of Sarasvati, it is grey and like a lotus of sixteen petals, presided over by goddess Lákini.

Àjñá - between the eyebrows. Also called *Paramakalá* or *Muktatriveni*, it is like a lotus of two petals white in colour. It is from this *cakra* that the three *nádis, Idá*, etc., spread out to different directions. Symbolised by the letters *Ha* and *ksa*, it is the seat of mind, presided over by goddess Hakini. The word *Àjña* means order, order of *guru* who is supposed to reside in it.

Cakrabheda or *Satcakrabheda* (literally meaning penetration of *Cakras*) means the manifestation or activation of Cakras; it is necessary for keeping the body fit and for the attainment of *Siddhis*. The six *Cakras* are identified in some Tantric works with the five elements and the mind[18]. This idea appears to have been based on the ancient Upanisadic theories; for example, the heart is compared to a lotus, and it is stated to have 101 *Nadis;* one of them penetrates the crown of the head; a man moving upward by it reaches immortality. In this connexion, the following Upanisads may be consulted; *Chandogya Upanisad*, VIII. I. I, viii.6.6, *Katha* vi.16, Prasna iii.6. Certain diagrams also are called *Cakras*. Different works differ in the names and number of *Cakras*. The *Sricakra* is often mentioned[19]. A Tantra, called *Cakrabheda* (Deccan College MS. No. 962 of 1884-87) mentions the following five *Cakras* used in Durgápájá according to *Kaulágama*.

Rajacakra, Mahácakra, Devacakra, Viracakra, Pasucakra (see *Catalogue*, vol. XVI on Tantra, p. 163). In another manuscript (Deccan College MS. No. 964 of 1887-91) some other *Cakras* are described as *Akadamacakra, Rnadhana, Sodhanacakra, Rasicakra, Naksatracakra* (*Catalogue*, vol. XVI

on Tantra, p. 251).

Sricakra[20], also called *Sriyantra* or *Tripuracakra*, connected with *Srividya*, has been described in verses, quoted in the *Samkara-Vijaya* of Anandagiri (Bib. Indica ed. 1868) p. 255 and in the *Setubandha* commentary on the *Nityásodasikarnava* (1.31-34) quoting from *Yamala* (probably *Rudrayamala*). The *Saundaryalahari* (verse 11) also describes it. A somewhat different description occurs in a work called *Devirahasya* (Deccan College MS. No. 490 of 1895-98). A description of the *Cakra* is as follows. A *Cakra* is to be drawn with the *bindu* in a small triangle. The *bindu* stands for *Sakti* or *Múlaprakrti* solidified. There are nine triangles five of which have their apex downward; these represents *Sakti*, and four, representing *Siva*, have their apex upward. The *bindu* is situated in the smallest triangle pointing downward. There are two pairs of triangles, then 14 triangles, then eight-petalled lotus, 16 petalled lotus, then 3 circles, then three boundary lines with four gates, these ten latter being the outer section of the *Yantra* and the lotuses of 8 and 16 petals being the inner section of the *Yantra*. There is a total of 43 angles. The part of the *Cakra* inside the boundary lines is called *bhupura*. The worship of *Yantra* is *bahiryaga*. *Antaryaga* is taking awakened *Kundalini* through the *Cakras*, from *Muladhara* to *Àjnácakra*, and then uniting it with Siva in the *Sahasrara-cakra*; the six *Cakras* are identified with the five elements and the mind.

Sahasrára Padma[21]

At the centre of the head is located the *Brahmarandhra* through which vital breath or life is supposed to exit at death. It is conceived as a multicoloured lotus of a thousand petals, facing downward.

The *Cakras*, according to the *Kaula* system, are as follows in the ascending order : *Nadicakra* in the *janmasthana*. Based on it is *Máyácakra* in the navel (from here it prevades everywhere), *Yogacakra* (in the heart, centre of yoga), *Bhedanacakra* (in the *tálu* region), *Dipticakra* (*Bindusthána* in between the eye-

brows), *Santacakra* (in the nádasthána).

The *Sádhaka* realises it as lustrous like a crore of suns and cool like a crore of moons. By rousing this energy one can reach the higher state of existence. When it is roused, the entire being of a person is flooded with very delicate ambrosia of music; this music is called *Kundalini-kújana* (song of *Kundalini*).

Rele identifies *Kundalini* with the right vagus nerve. But, Woodroffe (Avalon) discards the view; he says that it is not a nerve or any other physical substance or mental faculty; it is rather the ground substance of both. Kuvalayánanda also rejects Rele's theory. The *Rudrayámala* (XXXVI. 6-168) gives 1008 names of *Kundalini*, all beginning with *Ka*. *Sabdabrahma* is supposed to reside in *Kundalini*.

Besides the individual *Kundalini*, Tantra mentions a *Mahákundali*. The former develops personal existence. By getting upon *Mahakundali* one can transcend the narrow personal state, and establish himself in the wide universal state; *Mahákundali* is at the root of the universe.

HUMAN NATURE

In accordance with the preponderance of the qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, human nature is divided into three classes. On the basis of these qualities, human propensities have been divided into three classes, viz., *Divyabhava*, *Virabhava* and *Pasubhava*.

The *Maitryupanisad* (vi. 21) mentions Susumna Nadi as moving upward. The *Brhádaranyaka* (11.1.19) speaks of 72,000 *Nadis*.

The *Cakras* are sometimes identified with the nerve plexuses of modern physiology. This appears to be wrong in view of the fact that, in Tantra these are imaginary things belonging to the subtle body and not the gross body so that these disappear with the death of a person.

A person, with the preponderance of *Pasubháva*, is tied with

the fetters of kindness, infatuation, fear, shame, hatred, family, conduct, caste, etc. In him there is an excess of *Rajas* over *Tamas*. He is forgetful, idle and drowsy. He has no faith in *guru* and *mantra*. He observes Vedic practices. According to Tantra, he is the worst of men. A person, with *Virabháva*, due to the predominance of the quality of *Rajas*, does such acts as lead to grief. One with *Divyabháva*, having the predominance of the quality of *Sattva*, is the best. He is kind, pious, pure, truthful, and has an even attitude towards friends and foes.

SÀDHANÀ — PAÑCATATTVA

Sádhaná (worship, propitiation) is the means to the achievement of *Siddhi* (success, power). The ways of *sádhaná* are *pújá* (external or mental), knowledge of Sástras, *japa* (muttering prayer), *tapas* (penance), *mantra* (incantation), etc.

Sádhakas and *Sádhikás* are divided, in accordance with their physical, mental and moral qualities, into four classes; viz., (1) *Mrdu* (2) *Madhyama* (3) *Adhimatraka* and (4) *Adhimatrama*.

According to the *Kaula* school of Tantra, the *sadhakas* are of the following classes:

1. *Prakrti* — *Virácárin* — engaged in sacrifice and other rituals and resorting to *páncatattvas*.
2. *Madhyama Kaulika* — like Prakrti, with the difference that his mind is more attached to meditation, knowledge and concentration.
3. *Kaulikottama* — those who go beyond ritualism, and meditate on the Supreme Being.

In Tántric worship, *pañcatattva*, also called *Kuladravya* or *Kulatattva*, denoting five *Mararas*, plays an important role. These are *madya*[22] (wine), *mámsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), *mudrá* (finger-pose), *maithuna* (sexual intercourse).

Some Tantras recommend sexual intercourse when the female partner is in her monthly illness, and her sexual energy

is at its peak. For this act, the best place is the funeral ground among the corpses and blazing fire. This is why the female partner is coloured red in representations in art.

As regards the mode of Tántric sexual act, traditions differ. According to one, perhaps the oldest, the male seed should finally be emitted into the woman's corresponding organ like the offering of scared oil poured into an altar of fire. According to another tradition, the orthodox one, organs must be inhibited, and the energy thus conserved should be turned back and fully sublimated into a radiant inner condition.

The *Sádhaka* of the *Vira* type enjoys these things in their literal sense. Those of the *Pasu* class will take coconut-water or milk, etc., instead of *madya*, red radish, red sesamum, *masúra* (a kind of pulse) in place of fish, ginger, sesamum, salt, or garlic for meat; *mudra*, in this case, denotes barley, rice, etc. Instead of *maithuna*, they will surrender themselves like children to the feet of *Sakti*. For a *Sadhaka* of the *deva* type, *madya*[23] means maddening realisation of the Supreme Being, obtained by *Yoga*, by which he becomes unconscious of the external world. For him, *mámsa* means the action by which he dedicates all arts to himself identified with Brahman.

To him *matsya* means that *Sáttvika* knowledge which enables him to identify himself with all beings, and himself experiences the feelings of pleasure and pain. For him *mudrá* means the giving up of association with all evil things which cause bondage. For such a *sádhaka*, *maithuna* means the union of the *Kundalinî* energy, residing in *múládhára*, with the thousand-petalled *Cakra* at the centre of the head.

The *Kulárnava* Tantra gives the following explanation of the *Pañcatattvas; Madya*, called *Tirthávari* in some Tantras, is the nectar flowing from the union of *Kundalinî Sakti* with Siva in the *sahasrara-cakra* in the head[24]. He eats flesh (*mamsa*) who, with the sword of knowledge, kills the animals of merit and demerit, and leads his mind to Supreme Siva. He eats fish who controls his senses, and places them in his Àtman. *Maithuna* means the union of Supreme Sakti and Àtman; Sakti is aroused

in a *Kaulika*, but not in a devote of the *pasu* type. *Maithuna* symbolises the basic unity underlying the apparent duality of everything.

The *Mahanirvána* (viii. 170-173) recommends *madhuratraya* (three sweet substances) as substitutes for *madya*. For *Maithuna* it substitutes meditation on the feet of Devi and *japa* of the desired *mantra*.

Pañcatattva is not prescribed for all *Sádhakas*. One, who has reached a highst age of spiritual life, can take a *pañcatattva*, and that also under the guidance of the *guru*. As a safeguard against unrestrained enjoyment of *pancatattvas*, alternative articles are prescribed for those having an excess of animal propensities, and, as such, lacking in the requisite self-restraint. *Pancatattva* is commended for *Sádhakas* of the *Vira* type: they are possessed of self-control. Some explain the *makáras* as follows: *Madya* is the stream of nectar issuing from the brain-cavity, the abode of the soul. *Maisya* stands for suppression of vital air.

Mámsa means vow of silence. *Mirthuna* means meditation on creation and destruction.

The *Kaularahasya*[25] appears to describe how the three *Makárás, Madya, Mámsa, Maithuna,* were enjoyed by the common people. It speaks of drinking wine up to throat, eating meat and enjoying beautiful women. Quoting the *Kaularahasya*, the *Hamsavilása* (p. 104) says that *bhoga* and *moksa* do not coexist. But, for one, who enjoys beautiful women, both these come handy.

All, from Bráhmanas to low-class people, are entitled to *Kauladharma* according to the *mahánirvána* (xiv 184).

The *Kaulávali-nirnaya* (V. 113-123) suggests the following substitutes for the *Makáras*. A Bráhmana can use honey in a copper vessel or cow's milk or coconut-water in a bell-metal vessel. In the absence of meat, garlic and ginger can be used. Buffalo-milk or that of the sheep may be used for fish. Roasted fruits and roots may be used for *Maithuna*.

Some[26] are of the opinion that the significance of the *Makáras* was deliberately preverted by vicious people.

It seems that the use of *Makáras* by Tántric devotees brought slur upon Tántric practices. As a result, works like the *Sakti-sangama* started suggesting symbolic interpretations of them.

Tantra recognises the fact that, for progress along the path of *Sádhana*, one has to prepare the body, vital breath and mind. The body can be made fit by different postures (*ásanas*). For preparing the vital breath, one has to practice *pránáyáma*. This is prepared by *bhavana* (contemplation).

Three stages of *sádhana* are mentioned. These are

1. *Suddhi* — ridding oneself of physical and mental impurities.
2. *Sthiti* — getting rid of the darkness of delusion and the light of knowledge shining.
3. *Arpana* — realisation of one's identity with the object of meditation.

For a *sádhaka*, essential are *nana, tarpana, sandhyá, pújá* and *homa*.

Kundalini-yoga[27]

This is the basic thing for Tántric *sádhana*. The dormant spiritual energy is supposed, to coil round *múlúdhúra* like a serpent[28]. Its gradual ascent, by penetrating the *Cakras*, up to the apex (*brahmarandhra*) is the culmination of *Sádhana*.

Puja

Tantra provides that one must identify oneself with the deity one worships. *Nyása dhyána, japa* are important elements in *pújá*. The offerings may be five to ten in number. In Tantra, *mánasa puja* (mental worship) is regarded as superior to external *puja*. The *Saktananda-tarangini* (vi) says that the search for god outside, having disregarded god within onself

is the like the quest of glass ignoring the *Kaustubha* jewel in one's own hand Self-surrender characteristics Tántric *pújá*.

Siddhi

Siddhi, attainable through *sádhana*, may be of many kinds, e.g., *mantrasiddhi* (Success in *mantras*), *váksiddhi* (success in speech). By the former, *mantra* is made to secure the desired result. By the latter, the speech becomes infallible. After reaching the peak of spiritual life, one can posses the eight *siddhis*, viz., *animá* (power of assuming an atomic figure), *mahimá* (power of increasing one's size at will), *laghimá* (assuming excessive lightness at will),Isitva (acquiring superority over others), *vasitva* (subduing all to one's will) *Prapti* (obtaining anyting at will) *prakamya* (irresistible will), *kamavasayita* (suppression of passion or desire).

According to the *Mahánirvána* (II. 14-15), Vedic *mantras* led to desired results in *Satya* and other *Yugas*. But, in *Kali* Age, these are like serpents without venom or like dead beings. In this age, Tántric *mantras* yield quick results, and lead to salvation. This Tantra prescribes (iii. 14) that the *mantra Om sac-cid-ekam brahma* in the best; mere perfection in this *mantra* causes the soul to merge in Brahma.

Sometimes, the repetition of a *mantra* is recommended for a lac or even five lac times to ensure great effect like control of even a king.

In some cases, Tantric *mantras* are required to be recited like a Vedic one, with the names of the sage, the meter, the deity and *Viniyoga* (application).

Some Vedic *mantras* also are used in Tantra, but for purposes other than those in the Veda. For example, the mantra *jatavedase sunavama* (Rv. I. 99.1), though addressed to Agni, is employed in invocation to Durgá.

Mantra differs from prayer in that, while the former has fixed syllables, the latter may be said in any form. The syllables of a *mantra* are regarded as the manifestation of

Sakti.

Varieties of mantra are called by various names such a *Kavaca, Hrdaya, Astra, Raksá.*, etc.

As seed is sown on a soil which is cultivated and watered, so a *bñja-mantra* is put into a disciple's heart which is pure and has been drenched by the water of God's mercy. The *Mahánirvána* (V. 18-19) states that *Bijas* like *Hrim, Krim* make the form of the deity visible.

Most of the Tantras, particularly the *Parasuráma-kalpasútra Jnánárnava*, the *Sáradátilaka*, hold that *mantras* possess wonderful and incomprehensible power. The *Parasurama-kalpasútra* (1.7.11) mentions faith as the cause of this power. The *Saradatilaka* (II. 57,59) divides *mantras* into three classes, viz., masculine, feminine and neuter. Those ending in *Hum* and *Phat* are male, those ending in *Tha* are female and those ending in *Namas* are neuter.

Purascarana

It literally means performing or carrying out before something. The *Kularnava* (xvii. 87) states that *Puráscarana* is so called because, by the five-fold *upásaná*, the desired deity moves before the worshipper for conferring her favour on him. According to the *Váyaviya-samhitá*, the perfecting of the procedures of the *Múlamantra* is called *Purascarana*, because it has to be performed before the acts in which it is to be employed. In Tantra, it means a rite in which Vedic and Tántric *mantras* are repeated. The *Purascarana* of a *mantra* has the following constituents; *dhyána, pújá, japa, homa, tarpana, abhiseka* and feeding *Bráhmanas*. In a shorter form, the first three are performed. *Dasánga Purascarana* consist in the following additional items: *aghamarsana, suryárghya, jalpana* (*Kaulavalinirnaya* XV). It has been dealt with in many Tantras of which the following are important: *Máhanirvana* (vii. 76.85), Kularava (XV 7-9, 11-12), Sardatilaka (11-138-140) *Ahirbudhnya* (XX.52-53), *Jayakhyasamhitá* (Patala 19, verses 13-33), *Saktisamgama*, Sundari III 155-56, XIV. 45-46, *Gandharva* XXVIII.7-8,

Purascaryárnava, VI, p. 413, *Kálivilása-tantra* IV,6-7, Krsnananda's *Tantrasára*.

Raghavabhatta, in his commentary on the *Saradatilaka* (xvi-56), deals exhaustively with details of *Purascarana* that ARE common to all *mantras*.

It is regarded as indispensable for making the *mantra* effective. Raghavabhatta says that as a man, in the grip of a disease, cannot do anything, so a *mantra* without *Purascarana* is abortive.

The places, suitable for this rite, are a holy place, river bank, cave, top of a mountain, confluence of rivers, root of a *Bilva* tree, temple, seashore, any place where one feels happy.

One, performing this rite, is required to eat food obtained by begging (for *Brahmacarin* and *Yati*) *havisyanna*, vegetables, fruits, milk, bulbous roots, barley.

The practices, to be avoided, are sexual intercourse, meat, wine, speaking with women and Sudras.

Japa should be done from morning to noon.

After the rite is commenced, the devotee may encounter obstacles, disturbances and terrible sights. If he remains unmoved, he will achieve miraculous results. If he sticks to the prescribed long time, he will get joy, see pleasant dreams, hear sweet music and enjoy fragrance; these are some of the signs of the perfection of the *mantra*.

There are varying modes of *Purascarana* in accordance with the nature of the devotees, *Pasu, Vira* and *Divya*.

Yoga

In Tantra, *Yoga* is mainly twofold, *hathayoga* and *samádhiyoga*. The former consists in physical discipline paving the way to mind-control.

Hathayoga has the following five accessories instead of the eight prescribed in the *yoga* system of Patañjali.

Yama — control of the senses, non-violence, etc.

Niyama — study of Sástras, meditation on God.

Pránáyáma — control of breath.

Pratyáhára — withdrawl of the sense from the wordly objects.

Asana — a particular posture of the body.

Samádhiyoga is sixfold:

Dhyána, Náda, Rasánanda, Layasiddhi, Bhakti, Rája.

The fundamental difference between the *Yoga* of the *Yogasastra* of Patañjali and *Yoga* in Tantra is this. In Tantra, there is no difference between Sakti and Tattva so that Sakti surmounts all obstacles, and effects the union of the *yogin* with the Supreme Siva. Patañjali, however, does not recognise any Supreme power excepting *Prakrti* so that the *yogin* has no familiarity with any *Sakti* beyond *Prakrti.*

Káya (or Deha) — Siddhi

A fundamental difference between the Bráhmanical Sástra and Tantra is that, while the former ordains physical suffering or self-mortification as a means to the goal, the latter emphasises the value of the body as means to *Sádhaná*. This is not to say that the Bráhmanical Sástra neglects the body. On the contrary, it regards the body as the very first means for the practice of *dharma*. As Kalidasa says (*Kumarasambhava*, V.) *sariram adyam khalu dharmasadhanam.* The *Smrti-sastra* contains elaborate rules for having a good health and recipe for long life. But, it lays a great stress on long fast, arduous and strenuous rites and rituals, abstention from wine, etc., continence and restraint in enjoyments of the objects of sense.

Tantra, however, allows the devotee to indulge in enjoyment of the objects of sense, of course within limits. The core of Tantra *Sadhana* is *mukti* through *bhukti*, a concept absolutely foreign to the orthodox religion and philosophy. Manu unwquivocally states

Pravrttiresá bhútanám nivrttistu maháphalá/

There is inclination of creatures for these things; cessatiion of desire, however, leads to great result.

While orthodox Indian philosophy is concerned more with salvation in the other world, Tántric philosophy vigorously advocates *jivanmukti* (liberation in life).

A school of Tántric-Alchemic thinkers used to believe that, by certain yogic processes, *mantras* and chemical drugs, the body of flesh and blood could be made imperishable so that it could defy death. The *Káladahana* and *Mrtyuñjaya* Tantras are stated to contain methods of *Káyasiddhi* (making the body fit or unconscionably longlived).

It is believed that when *káyasiddhi* takes place, the body, strong as *Vajra* and full of youthful lustre, does not become subject to decay, disease and death. The conception is nothing new with the Buddhists and Alchemists in whose treatises it has been dealt with in detail. The power of *yoga* in rendering the body free from the ills, to which it is ordinarily subjected, has been clearly stated in the following lines of the *Svetásvatara Upanisad* (2, 12);

na tasya rogo na jará na mrtyuh /

práptasya yogágnimayam sariram /

One, having a body conditioned by *yoga*, has no disease, no decrepitude nor death.

The great efficacy of mercury and mica, in imparting adamantine strength to the body and preserving it for an incredible length of time, has been recognised particularly in the works on alchemy. Mercury is called *Parada*[29] or *Rasa*. It is believed to be Siva's Semen (*Siva-virya*) and mica is supposed to be derived from Sakti.

It is interesting to note that the Natha sect of *Yogins*, traditionally originated by Adinatha and introduced among the people by Matsyendranatha, later influenced by the Bauls and Sahajiya Sadhakas, following the Vajrayana mode, vigorously

practised *Kayasiddhi*. The Nathas believed in a process which is briefly this.

The thousand-petalled lotus within the head is turned down. This has to be turned upward by *yoga*. The mind has to be bathed in the nectar contained in that lotus where *Pranava* (*Omkara*) is to be meditated upon. The gateway of *Brahmarandhra* is to be shut. These things being done, the downward flow of ambrosia is checked. This process is called *Akasacandra-bheda* by the *Yogina*. It is supposed that the juice, exuded within the body, is drifted upward by the upblowing wind, and is stored in *Sahasrara*. The believers in this theory admit four kinds of *Candra* (moon), viz., *Adicandra, Nijacandra, Unmadacandra,* and *Garalacandra*. *Nijacandra*, which is of the nature of juice, taken upward, should be united with *Akasacandra* which is attached to *Sahasrara*. Finally, the yogin will drink the *Garalacandra*, which purifies the body and mind, and invigorates the system; this leads to *Siddhadeha*.

The Buddhists and Vaisnava Sahajivas believe in *Kayasiddhi* as the object of *sadhana*.

In the *New Testament* (Book IV); there is mention of supernatural birth, Birth from Above; this is supposed by some to refer to a body obtained by some sort of *kayasadhana*.

Footnotes

1. It is believed that these regions were so named according to the means of transport used in them. *Vishu, Ratha, Asva, Gaja* mean respectively sea-going vessel, chariot, horse and elephant.

   For the regions, indicated by these names, see Glossary.
2. Vide *Tantrik Texts*, Vol. 1, ed. A. Avalon, Intro., pp. ii-iv.
3. Vide P. C. Bagchi, *Studies in Tantras*, p. 3, 4.
4. See *Bahvrcopanisad — Saisa para saktih kadividyeti va hadividyeti va sadividyeti*. Also see comm. on it.
5. Vide H. P. Sastri, *Nepal Catalogue*, I. pp. 10, 85, 117.

6. *JASB*, XXVI 1930, pp. 129 f.f.
7. On the question of the priority of Buddhist Tantra over Hindu Tantra or vice versa, see B. Bhattacharya, *Sadhanamala* (Intro., II, P. LXXVIII) and Winternitz HIL II, p. 401.
8. For example, *Harsacrita* (ed. Kane), I. pp. 10, 25, 50 etc., *Kadambari* (ed. Kale), p. 56.
9. Vide Foote, *Collection of Indian Pre-historic and Proto-historic Antiquities*, Madras, 1916; K. R. Subramaniam, *Origin of Savism and its History in Tamil land*, Madras, 1920, Iyenger, *Stone Age in India*, Madras.
10. *HIL*, ii, p. 635.
11. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, I, 1927, p. 591.
12. According to some, the name is the Hinduised form of ka-me-kha, the name of a goddess worshipped by the Khasi tribe in the form of a *yoni* (female organ). See N. N. Bhattacharya, *History of Tantric Religion*, p. 103.
13. Vide *Vanglar Sadhana* by K. M. Sen, pp. 47-48.
14. We shall see that this Tantra originated in Bengal.
15. According to some, 72,000.
16. See *Pranatosini*, I. 4, *Satcakranirupana*, Raghavabhatta's comm. on *Saradatilaka*, xxv. 38.
17. See *Niruttara* X.
18. E.g. *Saundaryalahari*, v. 9
19. See *Sakti* and *Sakta* by Woodroffe (3rd ed.) p. 399, G. Kaviraj describes the system of *Cakras* according to Goraksanatha in *Sarasvatibhavana Studies*, II pp. 83-92. In the translation of *Satcakranirupana* (plates i-vii), Avalon illustrates the six *Cakras* and *Sahasrara* (plate VIII) along with their colours, etc. For Cakras — with illustrations, see C. W. *Leadbeater, Cakras*.
20. See P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmasastra*, V. pt. 2, pp. 1137-38.
21. See *satcakranirupana* XLI-XLIII.
22. Sometimes called *Sura* which, according to *Matrka-bheda-tantra* (iii.40) is so called as it imparts *suratva* (divinity) as

soon as drunk.

23. According to some, a preparation of hemp, called *Vijaya* or *Bhang*.

24. This is the view also of the *Kaulajnana-nirnaya* (vi. 18-19) and Bhaskararaya in his comm. on the *Lalitasahasra-nama* (verses 87-91).

25. Deccan College MS. No. 959 of 1884-87 (Copied Samvat 1790-1734 A.D.)

26. E.g. D. N. Bose, *Tantras — their philosophy*, etc., p. 110.

27. For the scientific basis of *Kundalini*, and the attitude of modern scientists to it, see Gop Krishna, *Biological Basis of Religion and Genius*, and its introduction by Weizsacker.

28. It seems to be anticipated by *sarparajni* (serpent-queen) of the *Rgveda*.

29. By Gopinath Kaviraj, reputed as a Tantric *Sadhaka* of a high order. He notes that one, Ramalinga Sastrin of Cidambaram, Madras (Tamil Nadu), who lived about a hundred years ago, attained *Kayasiddhi*. See G. Kaviraj, *Tantric Sadhana O Siddhanta*, II, p. 166.

Chapter-2

Nature of Tantric Doctrines

Chapter-2

These are *Advaita* (non-dualistic), *Dvaita* (Dualistic) and *Dvaitadvaita* (dualistic-non-dualistic). The 64 Bhairava Agamas, stated to have emanated from the mouth of Siva are *Advita*. Ten Saiva Àgamas are *Davita*. In 18 Raudra Àgamas there is a mixture of different doctrines.

Theory of Creation — Siva, Sakti

The Supreme Brahman is eternal and unchanging. He is both *niskala* and *sakala*; *kalá* means *Prakrti*.

The Sakti of Brahman is eternal and inseparable from Him. This sakti is *nirguna* (without attributes) and *saguna* (with attributes). As goddess in the form of consciousness, she manifests the being and, through her as goddess in the form of bliss (*ánanda*).

Brahman manifests Himself. Sakti pervades the universe like oil in sesamum. From Brahma-Sakti arose *Nada* from which proceeded *Bindu*.

The subtle body of the goddess is referred to as *mulamantrátmiká* (constituted by the basic mantra).

Siva, entangled in the web of Maya, and the latent Sakti are conceived as the supreme *Bindu*.

The *Bindu*, circular in shape, is bounded by the circumference of *Máyá*. At its centre is the place of Brahman, the abode of *Prakrti-Purusa*. This very *Bindu* is Prakrti-Purusa, Sabda-Brahman or Apara-Brahman.

As a result of the union of Siva and Sakti, the goddess becomes inclined (*unmukhi*) to Siva. Then the web of *Máyá* is snapped, and creation proceeds.

The relationship of Siva and Sakti is controversial. According to the *Kularnava* (i. 110), some advocate non-duality, others desire duality.

Sabda-Brahman manifests itself in three *Saktis*, viz., *Jñána* (knowledge), *Icchá* (desire) and *Kriya* (action).

The following terms are used to convey the completeness of Siva.

Svatantratá (independence), *nityatá* (eternality), *nitya-trptatá* (quality of being ever contented), *sarvajñatá* (omniscience).

From Paramasiva arises Sambhu, from Sambhu Sadasiva, from Sadasiva Isána and Rudra, Vishnu, Siva arise with their own Saktis without which they have no power.

In the *Mahánirvána* Siva has been called Sambhu, Sadásiva Sankara, Mahesvara, etc., each term indicating the different conditions, qualities or manifestation of the single Siva.

Sakti is the form of both *Máyá* and *Múlaprakrti*. Through the power of *Máyá*, Brahman conceals His own form, and appears in different manifestations. *Múlaprakrti* is unmanifested. In the manifest condition, she resides in the universe consisting of diverse names and forms.

Siva-Sakti resides in the *múladhara* and *Kundalini* within the human body. In all processes, Sabda-Brahman resides in the form of *Kundalini* and in manifested as *aksaras* (letters).

The order of creation, according to Tantra, is as follows.

Mulaprakrti—Sakti (resorting to Siva)

Mahat

Ahamkara	Taijasa or	Tamasika
(Vaikarika	Rajasika	or
or Sattvika	Ahamkara	Ahamkara of beings
		Panca Tanmatra
		Pancabhuta

Sakti is variously called *Máyá*, *Mahámáyá*, *Devi*, *Prakrti*, etc. She is both *Vidya* and *Avidya*. As *Avidyá* she causes bondage, and as *Vidya* she destroys rebirths and gives liberation. She is called *Àdyá Sakti* (the Primeval Energy) as

she is believed to have existed before creation. As the manifestation of *Cit* in Prakrti, she is called the Denoting Power (*vácakasakti*). Being in the form of *Cit*, she is also the Denoted Power (*vácya-sakti*).

Àtman is to be conceived as Devi. So Devi or Sakti is but a manifestation of Siva in the form of mother. She is Ambika and Lalita.

As Parabrahmna, Devi is beyond form, beyond quality. She is conceived in three forms. In the first or supreme form she is beyond knowledge. Her second body is subtle, being constituted by *mantra*; this aspect is beyond meditation. Her third form is the gross body which is easily comprehensible.

As Mahádeva, *Sakti* exists in different forms, e.g., Sarasvatì, Laksmi, Durga, Annapurna, etc. As Sati, Uma, Parvati, etc., she is the consort of Siva. As Sati she manifested herself as ten *Mahávidyás*. When she renounced her body, Siva carried the dead body which Visnu cut into 51 pieces which fell at different places which came to be called *Mahá-pìtha-sthánas*. At each such place, Devi along with her Bhairava, is worshipped.

Despite her endless forms, in which she resides in the objects of the universe, she is in reality one. As the single moon, reflected in the waves, appears to be many, so the single Sakti has diverse manifestations.

Sakti constantly resort to Siva. She first manifested herself when the universe emerged. Before this, *Sakti* was dormant in Siva.

The existence of Parama Siva in an attributeless condition is generally called *Sunya* in Saiva *Agamas*. It is beyond comprehension. It is also called as it is beyond all definitions or knowledge.

Tantra and Sákta works

These two kinds of works have many things in common. The chief difference is that, in the Sakta works, *Sákti* or Devi is the highest object of worship. But, in Tantras, *Sakti* may not

necessarily be treated as the highest divinity. These may be agnostic. Vedantic or Sámkhyaite in outlook. B. Bhattacharya (in Intro. to *Sadhanamálá II*) may have overemphasised the importance of *Sakti* by saying that a real Tantra must have an element of *Sakti*. It should be noted that *Sakti* is the designation also of the woman (one's own wife or wife of another person) with whom sexual intercourse (*maithuna* as one of the five *makaras*) is to be had in a Tántric rite. She is also called *Latá*, and this ritual is called *Latásádhana (Mahánirvána*, 1.52).

DASAMAHÀVIDYÀ

In Tantra, *Sakti* is also called *Vidyá* or *Máhavidyá*. The same *Sakti*, who is second to none, has been conceived in ten aspects. So, they are collectively known as *Dasamahavidyá*. The names differ in different works.

In the *Cámundá-tantra*, the names are as follows :

Kali, Tárá, Sodasi, Bhuvanesvari, Bhairavì, Chinnamastá, Dhumavati, Vagalá, Mátangi, Kamalá.

The *Málini-vijaya* gives the following list :

Káli, Nilá, Mahádurgá, Tvaritá, Chinnamastaká, Vágvádini, Annapúrná, Pratyangiras, Kámákhyá, Vásali, Bálá, Mátangi, Sailavásini. The number is 13.

The list in the *Mundamálá-tantra* tallies with that in the *Cámunda-tantra* above.

The *Mahavidyás* have been divided, in some Tantras. e.g., *Niruttara* (i. 6-8) into two groups — those belonging to *Kalikula* (the family of Kali) and those belonging to Srikula (family of Laksmi). To the former belong Kali, Tara, Chinnamasta, Bhuvanesvari, Mahisamardini, Tripura, Tvarita, Durga, Vidya and Pratyangiras. To the latter belong Sundari, Bhairavì, Bala, Vagala, Kamala, Dhumávatì, Matangi, Svapnavati, Madhumati and Mahávidyá. The total number is 20.

Some scholars are of opinion that from the Buddhist *Sádhanamálá* it appears that the idea of Máhavidyás was derived from Buddhist Tantra.

Àcára

In Tantra, various modes of *sádhaná* are recognised. These are seven according to some Tantras, nine according to others. In the *Kulárnava* (chap.ii), the following modes are mentioned:

(i) *Vedacárá*, (ii) *Vaisnavácára*, (iii) *Saivácára*, (iv) *Daksinacara*, (v) *Vámácára*, (vi) *Siddhántácára*, (vii) *Kaulacara*.

Each succeeding in the list is higher than the preceding one. *Vedácára* consists in an abundance of Vedic rituals. In the second one, the *Sádhaka* gives up a blind faith, and has firm faith in the saving power of Brahman. It is the way of devotion. In the third one, the devotee enters into the way of knowledge. In it, he combines *bhakti* and *sakti* with faith; he tries to acquire *sakti*. In the fourth mode, the *sadhaka* becomes able to meditate upon the three *saktis* of *kriyá*, *icchá* and *Jñána* of Brahman, and acquire fitness for the worship of the three, viz. Brahman, Visnu and Mahesvara. In the fifth one, the *sádhaka* proceeds from *pravritti* (activity) to *nivrtti* (cessation of desire). In it, he cuts the bonds of delusion, shame etc. with which a person of *pasubhava* is tied. According to the *Parananda-sutra* (p.p. 1-3, 13), *Vámácára* is of two kinds, viz. *Madhyama* in which all the five *Makaras* are resorted to, and *Uttama* in which only Madya, *Mudra* and Maithuna are resorted to. The word *Vama* apparently means 'left' as distinguished from *Daksina* (right) in *Daksinacara*. Some take it as *Vámá* (woman); *Vámácára*, according to them, means that *acara* which emphasises woman as an essential element in *Sádhana*. The way to the attainment of Sivahood, got in this *acara*, is completed in the sixth. He can now, with the help of the *guru*, reach *Kailacara*. In this condition, he becomes liberated in life (*Jivanmukta*) and with the knowledge of Brahman, reaches the state of *Paramahamsa*; this is the highest goal of Tantric *sádhana*.

The *Mahánirvána* (x. 112) holds that one does not become a *Kaula* by merely drinking wine, but by undergoing *Abhiseka*. Generally worship with the five *Makaras* is known as *Kulácára*.

According to the *Mahánirvána* (vii. 97-98), *Kula* is the designation of the individual soul, *Prakrti*, space, time, Àkása,

earth, water, fire and wind. The way of life, by which one looks upon all these as Brahman, is called *Kulácára*.

According to the *Saktsamgama* (Kálikhánda, Chap. iii. 32), *Kula* means *Upásakas* (worshippers) of Káli. The *Kulárnava* states that *Kula* means *gotra*, and that arises from Siva and *Sakti*. A man is called *Kaulika* if he knows that *Moksa* is attained from that, i.e. Siva and *Sakti*. Siva is called *Akula*, *Sakti*, *Kula*.

Other definitions of *Kula* are suggested in other works, e.g. *Gujyasamája* (Patala I. p. 6), Preface, P. viii of the *Saktisamgama*, *Tárákhanda*. In some Tantras, there are three *Márgas* (paths), viz. *Daksina*, *Vama* and *Uttara*, each succeeding one being superior to the preceding one. *Daksina-márga* is that which is declared in the Veda, Smrti and Purana. *Váma* is declared in the Veda, Smrti and Àgama. *Uttara* is what is declared by the words of the Veda and of the *Guru*.

In some texts, *Àcáras* are broadly divided into two classes, *Aghora* and *Yoga*. *Aghora* is the name of the *acara*, followed by Aghorins, a Saiva sect.

Guru[1], Sisya[2], Diksa[3], Abhiseka[4]

Tantra believes that one can take to *sádhaná* only when initiated by the *guru*. The *guru* must have certain qualities. He will decide the suitability of a *mantra* for a particular disciple. A female *guru* is highly suitable; one's mother is one's best *guru*. Initiation by one's father is forbidden. The husband is not allowed to initiate his wife.

The concept of *Diksá* is Vedic. Vedic initiation was a must for the three higher castes. It was, however, denied to women in Smrti. Tantric *Diksá* is more elaborate, and is allowed even to women and Súdras.

A person, fit for being *Guru*, must be calm, of unimpeachable character, versed in Sástra, free from avarice, truthful. Buddhist Tantras, like the *Jñánasiddhi*, identify the *Guru* with the *Buddha*, and regard him as omniscient. In some Tantras, warning against hypocritical *Gurus* has been sounded.

Some Tantras, e.g. *Nirvanatantra*, mention four classes of *gurus*, viz., *guru*, *parámaguru*, *parapara-guru* and *paramesthi-guru*. According to the *Nilatantra* (V. 73), Goddess Sakti is *Parapara-guru*, Siva is *Parámesthi-guru*, one's preceptor is his *guru* and *guru's guru* is *Para* or *Paramaguru*. Some works (e.g., *Nilatantra* vv. 65, 66) divide *gurus* into three classes, viz., *Divyaugha* (divine beings), *Siddhaugha* (sages) and *Mánavaugha* (human beings). It appears to divide *gurus*, in another way, into two classes, viz., *Táráguru* (V. 64) and *Devaguru* (V.71). Some other Tantras (e.g., *Syámárahasya*) also give the above classification of *gurus*.

It is stated that the names of male *gurus* should end in *ánanda* (e.g., Brahmananda) or *nátha* (e.g., Matsyendranatha, Minanatha), and those of the female preceptors in — *amba*[5].

After naming some *gurus*, the *Nilatantra* characterises them as belonging to *Tárinìkala*, i.e., a line of *gurus* imparting *Tarini-mantra* (V.68).

The position of the *guru* among the Tantric *Sádhakas* is so exalted that he is regarded as even superior to one's father. The *Nilatantra*, for instance, cites the verse (ii. 146) of Manu, which extols the preceptor, imparting Vedic initiation to a person, as superior to the progenitor; obviously, it substitutes Tantric *diksá* for Vedic initiation. This Tantra, in another context (V. 68), declares that the *mantrada* (giver of *mantra*) is superior to one's father (*janakádadhika*). Indian culture does not set must store by the physical birth of flesh and blood which is common to lower animals. It lays greater stress on intellectual and spiritual regeneration as more important than mere generating the mass of flesh. The wise Indians of old expressed the sublime idea that the body is sure to perish (*ekántavidhvamsi*), whereas merits last through ages (*Kalpánta-stháyino gunáh*).

Among other qualities of a *Sisya;* he must be respectful and look upon the *Guru*, *Devatá* and *Mantra* as one. It is incumbent upon him to keep secret the *mantra* and *puja* imparted to him by his *Guru*. He should surrender his body, wealth and even life to the *Guru*.

The position of the *Tántric Guru* is so important that he is considered as capable of appeasing even Siva if he is angry, but there is no means to pacify the indignant *Guru*. As *mantra* was believed to be extremely powerful, the person who gave it came to occupy an exalted position.

The *Páránandasútra* (pp 15-16, Sutras 56,63) clearly sets forth the function of a *Guru* who, among other practices, should ask the neophyte, who has accepted the three *Makáras* of *Madyá, Mudra* and *Maithuna* offered by him, to follow the *Kaula* practices.

The *Mahánirvána* states (V. 201-202) that the person of the same sect, Sákti, Saiva, Vaisnava, Saura or Ganapatya, as that of the *Sisya* can be his *Guru*.

Kauláćara was so important that the *Kulárnava* (ii. 11, 16) and the *Mahánirvána* (iv. 42) hold that one, who has studied the Veda but is ignorant of *Kuladharma*, is inferior to a Candala. Again a Candala, aware of *Kuladharma*, is superior to a Brahmana.

According to the *Mahánirvána*, all, from Brahmanas to the untouchables, have right to *Kula* practices. Some, however, hold that one, who has not conquered one's senses, has no right to it. Ramesvara, commentator of the *Parasuramakalpasutra*, holds this view.

Diksa[6] has been exhaustively dealt with in some well-known Tantras, e.g., *Prapañcasára* (v.vi), *Kulárnava* (14.39 ff), *Sáradátilaka*, (Patala 4), *Jnanarnava* (Patala 24), *Pranatosinì* (II.4), *Mahánirváná* (X. 112-119). It has been discussed in the *Diksaprakasika* of Visnubhatta, pupil of Satyanandanatha, composed in Sakt 1719 (1797 A.D.).

The word *Diksá* is generally derived from the root *dá* (to give) and *ksi* (to destroy). Thus, it means that it confers on the disciple a divine state or knowledge, and destroys sins.

Diksá is of two kinds, viz.

Bahirdiksa — consisting of *puja, homa* and other external rites.

The *Sattvika* feeling is aroused by it.

Antardiksá — it helps in the awakening of the *kundalinì* energy.

According to some, *diksá* is of three kinds, viz.

Sámbhavi — by it the mind is purified.

Sákti — by it the spiritual energy aroused.

Mántrì — it arouses the power of *mantra* and gods.

The *Visvasára-tantra* provides for four forms of *diksá*, viz. *Kriyávatì, Kalávatì Varnamayi* and *Vedhamayí*[7]. These have been defined in the Glossary.

The *Kularnava* (XVI) states seven kinds, viz., *Kriya, Varna, Kala, Sparsa, Vak, Drk, Manasa*[8].

According to the *Rudrayámala*[9], *diksa* is of three kinds, viz., *Ànavi*[10], *Sákti* and *SámbhavÀ*.

The other forms of *diksá* are *Krama, Pancayatana, Ekamantra*[11], etc.

By *diksá* a person advances on the way to salvation by getting the *malas* (impurities) in him removed. The *malas* are *Ànava* — it causes the rise of the narrow *jivahood* of Siva, without its removal the realisation of the identity of *Sakti* is not possible.

Buddhigata — by removing it one acquires real knowledge.

Máyìya — it is the cause of Ahamkára, the root of the knowledge of *visaya* and *visayin*. Salvation is not possible without its removal.

According to the *Kálivilása Tantra* (vi. 3-4), the best time for *Diksa* is Svati Naksatra on Friday on the fifth *tithi* of the dark half of *Phalguna*.

The *Saktisamgama* (Tárákhanda, xvii. 36-38) holds that an eclipse of the sun or the moon, particularly the latter, is the best time when consideration is necessary regarding the week day, *tithi, naksatra*, month, etc. The *Jnanarnava* (quoted in the Smrti-digest, *Nirnayasindhu* p. 67) prefers the solar eclipse.

The *Yoginitantra*, quoted in the same work, condemns *Diksa* on a lunar eclipse.

The concept of *Diksá* (initiation) is not new in Tantra. It has been an age-old one having prevailed since Vedic times. In the *Rgveda*, the word *diksá* is used as the name of the wife of Soma; in the Puránas, it is the name of the wife of Rudra Ugra or Rudra Vamadeva. In the *Mahábhárata, Harivamsa*, etc., the word denotes any serious preparation (as for battle). In words like *viraha-diksa, srngara-diksa*, etc, *diksá* means self-devotion to a person or god, complete resignation or restriction to, exclusive occupation with, etc.

In the Vedic sacrament of *Upanayana*, initiation by the *Àcárya* is essential. The idea underlying *diksá* is regeneration. This is clear from the word *djiva* (twice-born). By *upanayana* one is born for the second time; that is, after receiving physical birth from the parents, a person gets the second birth, i.e., intellectual and spiritual birth from the preceptor.

The *Aitareya Bráhmana* (i. 3) clearly brings out the likeness of the regeneration of a person by *upanayana* with the birth of a child from the embryonic stage.

The same idea appears to be at the root of the provision of an eclipse as the most suitable time for Tantric *diksa*. In an eclipse, the sun or moon is supposed to die to be born again.

The regeneration of a Tántric initiate is also indicated by a new name given to him by the *Guru*.

It is interesting to note that some tribes, both in India and some other countries, perpetuating primitive customs, regard initiation as essential in certain matters. For instance, among some tribes of Central India, one, who has not observed the puberty rites, is subjected to social ostracism[12]. In Fiji, youths, who do not undergo circumcision, are debarred from many social privileges[13]. Social opprobrium and tabooes are attached to the uninitiated members of some Central and South-East Australian tribes[14]. In some primitive secret societies, with tribal chiefs at the head, initiation particularly into tribal behaviour, customs and sex-life, is regarded as indispensable[15].

The Buddhists Tantra, entitled *Guhya-samája*, reminds one of the aforeasaid secret societies. In this connection, it deserves notice that the general principles of Buddhist initiation are believed to have been influenced by the system of tribal initiation[16].

Initiation of a special type is called *abhiseka*. *Abhisekas* of different kinds are applicable to disciples in different stages of spiritual life. These are (i) *Sáktábhiseka*, (ii) *Púrnábhiseka*, (iii) *Kramadiksábhiseka*, (iv) *Sámrájyabhiseka*, (v) *Mahasamrajyabhiseka*, (vi) *Yogadìksabhiseka*, (vii) *Pranadiksabhiseka* (viii) *Mahapurna-diksábhiseka*.

The first two are the most important. *Abhiseka* consists in sprinkling holy water on the neophyte while reciting *mantras* to propitiate different deities, especially for warding off evil spirits. For *Purnabhiseka*, one has to undergo severe ordeals; it is believed to confer divinity on the devotee.

Mudrá, Mandala, Yantra, Nyása

Mandalas or diagrams are an indispensable item in Tantric worship. It also became an essential feature in some orthodox Brahmanical rites and rituals.

The *Jñánárnava* (xxiv. 8-10, xxvi. 15-17) holds that *Mandala* and *Cakra* are synonymous. It describes several *Mandalas*. The *Sáradátilaka* (III. 113-118, 131-134, 135, 139) and some other works describe some *Mandalas*.

Both Hindu and Buddhist Tantras attach great importance to *Mandalas*. Some Tantras, e.g., *Mahánirvána* (X. 137-138), refer to *Mandalas* drawn with coloured powders. In the *Mañjusrinñlakalpa*, *Mandalas* are described with special direction for painting them. The *Guhyasamája* speaks of a *Mandala* of sixteen cubits with a *Cakra* inside. The *Nispanna-yogávali* of Abhayákaragupta of the time of the Bengal king Rámapála (11th-12th cent.) describes twenty-six *Mandalas*, each in a separate chapter.

Some of the *Manadalas* are *Sarvatobhadra, Caturlingatobhadra, Prásáda-vástu-mandala, Grhavástu-mandala, Harihara-*

mandala. Ekalingato-bhadra. The *Sarvatobhadra* (auspicious on all sides) has been common to all kinds of worship.

The word *Mandala* also denotes a gathering of Tántric devotees who collectively perform rituals involving *Pancamakaras.* They, along with their female partners, surround the leader (*nayaka*) who, accompanied by his consort, sits in the middle. The *Kaulavalinirnaya* (VIII) and the *Mahanirvana* (VIII. 154-56) deal with *Mandala.*

Mudrá is one of the *Makaras* or *Pañcatattvas*, essential for Tántric *Sádhaña.* It generally means poses of the hand or finger. Esoteric meanings of the word have been stated in connexion with *Pañcatattva.* The *Kulárnava* (xvii. 57) derives the word from root *mud* (to give delight, pleasure) and 'dravay' (causative or *dru*), and says that it is so called as it gives delight to gods, and melt their minds.

The *Sáradátilaka* (XXII 106) also gives the etymological meaning of the word as that by which all gods are delighted. The commentator, Rághavabhattam derives the word as *mudam ráti dadáti* (that which gives delight).

There is a great divergence among the Tantras regarding the names, number and definition of *Mudrás.* The Tántric Texts (I. p.46-f) contain a list of *Mudrás* with names and definitions. It is stated that *Aváhani* and eight others are the nine common *Mudras.* Then nineteen *Mudrás,* especially suitable for Visnu worship, are mentioned. Ten *Mudrás,* suitable for Siva, are enumerated. One for the worship of the sun and seven for that Ganesa are mentioned. The *Mudra-nighantu* also names and defines nine *Mudras* including *Avahani.* Then it names 19 *Mudras.* The *Naradatantra,* quoted in the *Varsakriyákaumdi* of Govindananda, describes the *Mudrás* specially suitable for Visnu worship.

The *Sáradátilaka* (XXIII. 106-114) names and defines nine *Mudras.* The *Jñánárnava* (iv. 31-47, 51-56, XV.46-68) mentions over thirty *Mudrás.* The *Jayákhya-samhitá* (Patala 8) mentions fifty-eight. The *Visnusamhita* (vii. 45) says that *Mudras* are innumerable, it names and defines about thirty. The *Kamakalavilasa*

refers (verses 46, 47) to nine *Mudras.* The *Nityásodásika* mentions nine. Some other noted Tantras, dealing with Mudrás, are the *Kulárnava* (xvii. 90-93) *Kaulavali-nirnaya* (vii.5-14), *Mahánirvána* (vi.77).

The nine *Mudras,* described in the *Saradatilaka*[17], are as follows :

1. *ÀváhanÀ* — Folding both hands in a hollow illing the hollow fully with flowers.
2. *Sthápanì* — Same as the above, but the folded hands are held upside down.
3. *Sannidhápana* — Two hands formed into a closed fist, and joined together with only the thumbs raised up.
4. *Sannirpdhanì* — Same as the above with the thumbs closed inside the fist.
5. *Sammukhikaranì* — Two closed fists held upwards.
6. *Sakalìkrti* — Action of making the *Nyasa* of the six limbs on the limbs of the image of the deity worshipped.
7. *Avagunthana* — Closing the fingers held straight and turned downward, waving the hand round the image.
8. *Dhenu* — Putting the right small finger over the right ring-finger, intertwining the former with the left ring-finger, the left small finger, as it is, to be intertwined with the right ring-finger, the left finger to be passed over the left middle finger and the left thumb, and to be intertwined with the right hand middle finger brought to the right side of the left index finger and the right hand index finger to be joined with the left hand middle finger.
9. *Mahámudrá* — Intertwining the thumbs of both hands and holding the other fingers straight.

The *Mudrálak sana* (Deccan College MS. No. 291 of 1887-91) deals with *Mudrás* appropriate for the worship of Visnu and other gods.

Some other well-known *Mudrás* are *Samkha, Abhìti* (*Abhaya*), *Ankusa, Trikhandá, Khecarì, Yoni*. A few *Mudrás*, mentioned in the *Nityásodasiká*, indicate the purpose for which they are employed; e.g., *Sarva-samksobhakarini* (causing agitation to all), *Sarvavidravani* (causing all to run away), *Akarsini* (attracting others), *Sarvavesakári* (causing epilectic giddiness or demoniacal possession to all) *Unmádinì* (causing lunacy).

The origin of *Mudrás* may be traced to the art of dancing in which various hand-poses were used. Bharata's *Nátyasástra* (c. 4th. cent. A.D. according to some) is the earliest extant dramaturgic work to describe (Chap. ix) various poses of the hands and fingers.

Not only Hindu Tantra, but also Buddhist Tantra deals with *Mudras*. The *Àrya-mañjusrimñlakalpa* names and defines 108 *Mudrás*.

Waddell describes[18] nine *Mudras* practised in Tibet by the Lamas. Burgess mentions[19] the following nine Mudras[20] which slightly differ from Waddell's description:

1. *Bhúmisprs* or *Bhúmisparasa*[21] — An attitude of Sákya Buddha (making the earth a witness)
2. *Dharmacakra* — (Teaching attitude)
3. *Abhaya* (blessing) — The left hand is open on the lap, the right hand raised in front of the chest with the fingers and thumb half extended and with the palm facing forward.
4. *Jnana* (*Dhyána* ?) or *Padmasana* (posture of contemplation).
5. *Vara or Varada*[22] — Right hand hanging down over the knee, the palm turned outward symbolising charity.
6. *Lalita* — (Enchanting).

7. *Tarka* — Right hand raised to the chest and slightly constricted.
8. *Sarana* — (Of refuge or protection).
9. *Uttarabodhini* — (Pose of highest perfection).

It is, perhaps, not an accidental coincidence that both Hindu and Buddhist Tantras mention nine common *Mudrás*. Their number is nine in both, though their names vary.

In some cases, the term *mudrá* appears to mean Yogic posture of the body. Two such *mudras* are very important. One is *Khecari*, and the other *Yoni*. These have been described in Glossary.

The Jainas also had *Mudrás*. They had two works[23] on the subject, called *Mudrávicára* describing 73 *Mudras* and *Mudravidhi* describing 114.

Yantra is another essential item in Tantric rite. Sometimes also called *Cakra*, it is diagram or figure engraved, drawn or painted on metal, stone, paper or other materials. The difference in the application of *Mandala* and *Yantra* is that, while the former may be employed in the worship of any deity, the latter is appropriate for the worship of a particular deity or employed for a particular purpose.

The *Kulárnava* derives *Yantra* from the root of *yantr*. At another place, it states that *yantra* is so called as it saves the worshipper from Yama or God of Death and goblins and other dangers. Again, it says that *yantra* is so called as it removes *yantranas* or pains arising from such faults as love and anger.

This Tantra states (vi. 85) that *yantra* is a development or product of *mantra*. The *Kaulavalinirnaya* holds that worship without a *yantra* is futile. Some works, e.g., *Merutantra* (XXXIII. 13) evolved a *yantra-gayatri*. It appears that *yantra* was designed to facilitate the concentration of the mind. *Yantra* is regarded as the body of the deity.

The following are some of the well-known Tantras which deal with *yantras*.

Prapañcasára (Patalas 21, 34), *Saradátilaka* (vii. 53-56, XXIV), *Kámakálavilása* (VV.22., 26, 29, 30, 33), *Nityásodasikárnava* (I. 31-43), *Nityotsava* (p.p.6.64-65), *Tantraraja-tantra* (II.44-51, viii. 30 ff. xxxiii), *Abhirbudhnya* (Chaps. 23-26), *Mantramahodadhi* (20th Taranga), *Kaulajnana-nirnaya* (X), *Kaulavalinirnaya* (iii. 105-135), *Meru* (Prakasa 33), *Mantra-maharnava* (Uttarakhanda, Taranga 11).

Yantra, drawn on cloth, leaf, stone, metal, etc., is a symbol or geometrical figure representing a deity. It is conceived as the body or abode of a deity. In some cases, it is taken to represent mental faculties or pure consciousness, and microcosm of the human body.

Some *yantras* are prescribed for malevolent purposes. For example, the *Sáradátilaka* (vii. 58-59) prescribes an *Agneya-yantra* to be drawn on a garment gathered from a pile in a cemetery and buried near the house of his enemy for the latter's destruction. Two *yantras* for the destruction of the enemy are described (xxiv. 17-18, 19-21). The *Prapañacasára* (xxxiv. 33) provides a *yantra* for rousing passion in a woman, and making her run to the person concerned. Some other Tantras, dealing with *yantra*, are the *Gandharva,* (vii), *Matrkabheda* (xii. 6 ff), *Kularnava* (vi, xvii), *Saktisamgama, Tara,* xiii. 203, LL2, *Purascaryarnava,* (vi), *Tantrasara* of Krsnananda, *Saundaryalahari* (xi).

Besides the worship of *yantras,* there is provision (e.g., *Tantrarájatantra,* Patala 8, verses 30-32) for wearing them on the head, arms, neck, waist or wrist.

A very interesting *Yantra* is that called *Sri.* It symbolises creation. There is a central downward-pointing triangle which is red. There are several interwoven triangles, four male pointing upward, and four female pointing downward. Their interpenetration results in circuits of lesser triangles, which appear to show the subdivision of the original creative energies into more definite forces. There are outer circles and rings of lotus-petals symbolising the unfolded beauty of the world. Thus, all the different stages of the creative process appear

to be at one place.

For various meanings of the term *Yantra,* see Glossary.

The term *Nyása* is derived from the root *as* (to cast), preceded by '*ni*', and literally means placing or depositing in or on something.

According to the *Kulárnava, Nyasa* is so called because, in it, the riches that are acquired in a righteous way are deposited, placed with persons whereby all-round protection is got. So, by the ritual touch of the chest and other limbs with the fingertips and the palm of the right-hand along with *mantras,* the worshipper can act fearlessly in the midst of bad people and becomes like a god. The *Jayákhya-samhitá* (Patala xi. 1-3) also expresses a similar idea.

Nyása is an important part of Tantric rites. It means the mystical sanctification of the several parts or limbs of the body with *mantras.*

It has been dealt with, *inter alia,* in the following Tantras:

Jayákhya-samhitá (Patala XI), *Prapañcasára* (vi) *Kularnava* (iv. 18 ff), *Sáradátilaka* (iv, 29-41, V. 5-7), *Mahánirvána* (III. 41-43, V. 113-118) *Gandharva-tantra* (ix. 2), *Krsnananda's Tantrasara* P. 93, *Taratantra* II. 3, *Tarrsakti-sudharnava* V. p. 169, *Purascaryarnava* xii, p. 1166. Some of the well-known *Nyasas* are *Hamsanyasa, Pranavanyasa, Matrkanyasa, Mantranyasa, Karanyasa, Anganyasa, Pithanyasa.* Each of these is accompanied by a *mantra.* For example, in *Anganyasa,* one has to recite the *mantra om hrdayaya namah, om Sirase svaha,* etc.

Six kinds of *Nyásas* are applied in regard to *Vidyás,* Káli, Tárá, etc. In *Mátrkányása,* which is two-fold according as it is *antah* (internal) or *bahih.* The Sakti letters (*Matrkas*) are to be externaly felt on the head (*RSI*), face (*Chandas*), rectum (*Bija*), legs (*Sakti*) the entire body (*Kilaka*).

The *Mahánirvána* (V. 176-178) specifies the limbs on which there should be *Nyása* of the letters of the alphabet. This is prescribed also in the *Sáradátilaka* (V. 58). *Rághavabhatta's* commentary on V. 401. of the same work quotes verses laying

down how each letter is to be meditated upon. Woodroffe (*Principles of Tantra*, pp. LXXI-LXXVII) compares *Nyasa* with the Christian practice of making the sign of the cross.

SAVA-SADHANA[24]

Some Tantras prescribe *Sava-sadhana*. The *Kaulavali-nirnaya* (xiv. 75-260), Tárábhakti-sudhárnava (ix. pp. 345 ff.) and the *Kuacudamani* (vi. 19-28) etc., dal with it. Among Bengal Tantras, the *Tantrasára* to Krsnananda describes it.

The *Kaulaváli* describes it as follows :

The devotee should go to a cemetery or some other lonely spot after the first watch of the night, and secure a corpse. The dead body should be of a young handsome warrior, killed (not by the devotee) in battle. He should wash the corpse, offer worship to it and to Durga, and repeat the *mantra om durge durge raksani sváhá*. If the devotee is not scared by terrible sights that he may see, he secures *mantrasiddhi* after a long procedure. It is stated that *mantrasiddhi* is possible by *sava-sádhana* even in a single night.

Cakrapúja[25]

It means worship in a circle. *Cakra-puja* may be briefly described as follows. The Devi is represented in a *Yantra*. There should be a leader of the *Cakra*. Only persons of the *Vira* state are to be admitted, and those of the *Pasu* type are to be excluded. The women, who assemble, should put off their inner upper garments in a receptacle. Each of men, who assemble, should secure a female companion for that night by lot, i.e., by taking a lady's bodice out of those contained in the receptacle. Thus, promiscuous sexual inter-course was allowed in a *Cakra*.

It is ordained (e.g., *Kulárnava*, xi. 79, 84, 85) that the activities in a *Cakra* must never be disclosed; these should be kept a secret like the pregnancy of one's mother caused by her paramour.

The *Mahánirvána* provides for *Bhairava* and *Tattvacakras*.

Ways to liberation

The *Páránanda-sútra* (Gosed; pp. 1-3, 13) states three paths for the attainment of the goal. These are :

(i) *Daksina* — prescribed in the Veda, Smrti and Purana.

(ii) *Vama* — declared in Agamas. It is so called either because women (*Vámá*) play an important role in it or because it is a crooked way practised secretly. It is of two kinds, viz., *Madhyama* in which all the *makaras* are resorted to, and *Uttama* in which one *madya, maithuna* and *mudra* are used.

(iii) *Uttara* — shown by the word of the veda and the *Guru* who is *Jivanmukta*.

A few more paths are suggested by some Tantras. The *Kularnava* (ii. 7-8) mentions six paths, viz., *Vaisnava, Saiva, Daksina, Vama, Siddhánta, Kaula*; each succeeding is higher than the preceding one.

The above paths or modes (*ácára*) are divided into three groups according as the aspirant has *Divyabhava* (divine propensities), *Várabháva* (heroic mental state) or *Pasubhava* (animality). The mode, prescribed for *Divyabháva*, is *Kaulácara*. Those for *Virabhava* are *Siddhántácára* and *Vamacara*. The modes for *Pasubhava* are *Vedácára, Vaisnavácára, Saivácára* and *Daksinácára*.

Tantra recognises *Jivanmukti* (liberation while alive). For example, the *Páránanda* holds (p. 9, *sutras* 3-8) that it consists in visualising the deity worshipped. A person, who is liberated in life, is not affected by *Karman*, meritorious or sinful.

Bhakti in Tantra

The Vaisnava works, particularly the *Bhágavata*, lay stress on *bhakti* as a means to the highest goal. The *Bhágavata* (vii. 5.23-24) states nine-fold *bhakti* towards Visnu. These are *sravana* (hearing), *kirtana* (reciting names), *smarana* (remembering), *padasevana á* (shamposing the feet) *arcana* (worship), *vandana*

(salutation), *dasya* (service), *sakhya* (friendship), *átma-nivedana* (self-surrender).

Some Tantras also recognise nine modes of *bhakti*. For example, the *Rudrayámala* (xxvii. 103-104) mentions nine modes with slight variations. It provides *manana* for *sravana*, *dhyána* for *sakhya*. It may be noted that the Tantra leaves out the word Visnu, mentioned in the *Bhagavata* in this connexion.

The *Páránandasútra* (pp. 6-7, *Sutras* 35, 38, 59) accords to *bhakti* the highest position among the means to the goal. It says *bhoga-svargápavarga-kámksinám bhaktir eva ekah panthah; bhakti* is the sole means for those who desire enjoyment, heaven and salvation.

Yuganaddha

It is a symbol pointing to the unique harmony and union of masculinity and femininity, of blunt truth and symbolic truth of intellect and humanity.

It represents the union of Male and Female principle; it is the non-dual state of the unity of *Súnyatá* and *Karuna* according to Buddhist Tantra[26].

In his book, entitled *Yuganadha*, Guenther, on the basis of Buddhist Tantras, tries to show that Buddhist Tantrikas look upon a life as a whole. They do not advocate excessive indulgence in passions nor do they teach rejection of or escape from life. They require complete reconciliation to the facts of life. The sexual aspect, found in Tantras, is a corrective against the one-sided intellectualism and rationalism of philosophy which is not capable of tackling the problems of day-to-day life.

Number of Tantras

There is no consensus about the number and names of Tantras. According to the *Nityásodasikarnava* (i. 22), the number runs to millions. The orthodox scholars give the number as a lac or more. In some Tantras, the number is 64[27]. As we have stated in connexion with the classification of Tantras, each of the three geographical divisions, called Rathakranta,

Visnukranta and Asvakránta, is believed to have produced 64 Tantras. Tantras of the *Yamala* class are usually regarded as eight in number; the names differ in different sources.

According to the *Sammoha Tantra*, Cina has 100 main Tantras and 7 subsidiary ones, Dravida has 20 principal and 23 secondary works. Kerela has 60 chief works and 500 subsidiary ones. According to the *Nihsvasa-tattva-samhita*, the Agamas are 18 in number. The *Meru-tantra* tells (i. 21) us that Siva composed 108 Tantras.

The *Varahitantra* mentions 54 Tantras.

The *Siddhanta Agamas* of South India number 28; there is difference of opinion regarding their number and extent.

The number of *Pancaratra Agamas* is generally stated to be 108. Their number is actually over 200. The number of Vaisnava Tantras is 25, according to the *Agnipurana*. The *Kaulavali-nirnaya* enumerates numerous Tantras (1-7) including *Yamalas* (2-14).

According to the *Tantraloka* (i. 18) of Abhinavagupta, there are groups of ten, eighteen and sixty-four Saiva Tantras.

Sákta Sect — a general view

The worshippers of Sakti as the Female Energy are called Sáktas. Sakti has been conceived in different forms, of which Kali[28] is the commonest. The other well-known forms are Tripurá, Lohita, Sodasiká, Kámesvari.

Sakta works and Tantra have many things in common. The fundamental difference is that while, in the former Sakti or Devi is worshipped as the highest divinity, in the latter the worship is not confined to Devi. Tantra may be agnostic, Vedantic or Samkhyaite in its philosophical approach.

That the Sáktas developed a philosophy having a great impact on the society is proved, *inter alia*, by the fact that the *Váyupurána* (104.16) includes it among the philosophical schools. There are evidences to prove that the Sákta cult prevailed long before the eighth century A.D., especially in

Bengal and Assam, the two strongholds of Tántric religion. Eight Sákta Ksetras are mentioned in *Bárhaspatya sátra* (iii. 123-124).

The word Sakti occurs several times in the *Rgveda* (e.g., iii. 31.14; v. 31.6, vii. 20.10, x. 88.10), but it is conceived as the Energy of gods and not as a separate creative principle. R. V. v. 47.4 (*Catvára im bibharti*, etc.) is interpreted as referring to the Sákta doctrines. But this interpretation is not acceptable to all.

Some Upanisads mention Sakti. For example, the *Svetasvatara* says that the Brahmavadins had a vision of Sakti as not different from God. It holds (vi. 8) that Brahman possesses the highest Sakti which is variously heard : *Svábháviki jñánabalakriya* (natural knowledge, strength and action). In this connexion, it may be added that P. V. Kane points out that Upanisads like *Bhávanopanisad*, were fabricated by the Saktas to prove the antiquity of their cult.

Like Tantra the Sákta cult provides for both *yoga* and *bhoga*. In the manner of Tantra it prescribes worship with *pancatattva*, and holds that there is no means of greater happiness and liberation than the fifth *tattva* or sexual intercourse.

Sakti is conceived as the primordial principle of all activities in the universe. The basic doctrine is that God is one. He is to be conceived as mother as well as destroyer. Sakti is generally called Devi who has been eulogised in some Puranas, e.g. *Vámana* (18-19), *Devibhágavata*[29] (iii. 27), *Brahmánda* containing *Lalitá-máhátmya, Matsya* (xiii. 24-54), *Kúrma* (i. 12). The *Devimahatmya* of the *Markandeya-purana* is one of the principal works of the cult. In the Puranas Sakti is variously designated as Mahisamardini, Kundalini, Durga, Katyayani, Candi, etc.

The Vedánta doctrine that Brahma is one and that he has all powers might have suggested the unity and omnipotence of Sakti.

It is interesting to note that, in the *Kúrma* (1.12.261-262), certain Sástras, including certain classes of Tantra, are

condemned. It is stated that the Sástras, noted below, which are opposed to Veda and Smrti, were propogated by Devi in order to confuse the people, and were based on ignorance. These Sastras are Kápála, Bhairava Yámala, Vána, ¾rhata.

Like the followers of Tantra the Saktas also developed certain debasing practices. For example, the *Kaulavali-nirnaya* declares that all women are fit for intercourse to a Sakta excepting the wives of his *Guru* and of those Saktas who have attained the state of *Vira*. It goes (viii. 223-225) so far as to allow incestuous sexual union. The *Kalivilasa-tantra* (x. 20-21) allows illicit sexual relation to a Sakta provided he does not continue up to the emission of semen; thus he can have mastery over supernatural powers.

Like Tantra again Saktasastra declares that the principal aim of a Sakta should be to realise his identity with *Yantra, Mantra, Guru* and Devi.

You, the omnipotent one, are indeed Sakti of the world. You are the cause of everthing. You sport in the web of delusion created by you, as an actor in the dramatic representation created by himself.

A popular Sákta superstition is that jackals (Sivá) are Sakti incarnate; offerings of food to them are supposed to be highly meritorious.

Sáktavidyás (*mantras*) are divided into three classes[30], viz., *Kadi* (*KA, E, I, LA, HRIM*), *Hádi* (*HA, SA, KA, HA, LA, HRIM*) and *Sádi* (*SA, KA, HA, LA, HRIM*).

Sáktism developed in Bengal to a great extent. In the Sakta Tantras of this region the main idea is that Sakti is the pivot round which Sakta philosophy revolves. She is both manifest (*Vyakta*) and unmainfest (*Avyakta*). Everything from the principle of *Mahat* up to the minutest atom is her creation. Creatures are a narrow manifestation of Sakti by worshipping which they can realise Mahasakti, and thus realise the Supreme principle and ultimately attain Sivahood. The main object of *Sakti-sadhana* is to realise the identify of Jiva and Siva.

It should not be supposed that the worship of Female Energy was an isolated phenomenon in India or an absolutely novel conception in Tantra.

Researches into the social conditions among the primitive people, including the tribes of India, reveal the domination of females[31]. This appears to be projected into the conception of the superiority of Mother Goddess. In many primitive societies, the priestess is regarded as superior to the priest. Among such people, descent is traced through the mother, and the right to property devolved through her.

In the religion of the Semites of old, the superiority of the mother was recognised. Frazer thinks[32] that, in ancient times, it was widespread throughout Asia Minor. He points out[33] that the ancient system of mother-superiority lingered on in Egypt down to the Roman times (4th-5th century).

Briffault is, perhaps, right[34] in thinking that, with the progress of agriculture, the matriarchal status of women as owners and heiresses of cultivable lands and also as priestesses functioning in magic rites for securing fertility, was bolstered up.

Thompson thinks that, in the hunting stage, while men were engaged in killing beasts and birds, the comparatively softer, yet essential, work of food-gathering was entrusted to women. So long as the society depended for food on garden-tillage, it was within the sphere of women's activity. He thinks that, with garden-tillage replaced by field cultivation and the hoe by the cattle-driven plough, the work of agriculture became the exclusive work of men. Thus, *matria-potestas* yielded place to *patria-potestas*. Traces of woman-superiority still linger on in such tribal institutions as matrilocal marriage, avunculate, female dominated religion, etc.

He holds that all industries in ancient times were home industries. As such, it is but natural that women played a vital role in them. With the growth of large-scale industries men, perhaps, took the leading part in industries. As in the fields, so in the factories they figured without their female partners or with them playing only the role of assistants and associates.

In another context, we have discussed the wide prevalence of the cult of Mother Goddess in various countries.

In India, the relics of Indus Valley Civilisation reveal female figurines which, perhaps, testify to the idea of Sakti as the Supreme Deity.

In the Sámkhya philosophy, as we shall see, Prakrti, the female principle, is all-important; She is *Pradhána*. Thus, she appears to be a reflex of the dominant female in the matriarchal system.

The domination of females is undoubted in the *Stri-rájyas* (women's kingdoms) in ancient India. Such kingdoms flourished mainly in the north-eastern and north-western borders of India. Megasthenes, followed by Arrain and other, refer[36] to the female rulers of the Pándya country in the south. Traces of mother-superiority are still found in the region concerned. Such a country in the Kumaon-Grahwal region is referred to by Hiuen Tsang[37] (7th cent. A. D.), in the *Garuda Purána* (ch. IV) and Bilhana's (11th-12th cent.) *Vikramánkadevacarita* (xviii. 57). The Chinese pilgrim-traveller also records[38] a Stri-rajya near Lángala in modern Baluchistan. Varáhamihira (5th-6th cent. A.D.) appears to refer to it. (Brhatsamhita, xiv. 22) as located in north-western India. Woman's rule prevailed in the Nu-wang tribe of Tibet[39].

Vátsyáyana speaks of *Stri-rajyas* among the Vahlikas[40].

In the *Mahabharata* (VIII. 45.13), there is the practice of a man's inheriting the property of his maternal uncle.

Besides literary references to matriarchy and the superiority of females, we find the survival of this system among some people, particularly the tribes, even today. Among such tribes, the prominent are the Khasis of Meghalaya and the Garos[41]. Among the former, the priest (Lyngdoh) acts as the agent of the priestess[42].

Among the Náyárs, the joint family (*tarwad*) is constituted by a woman and her daughters. A woman is allowed to have more husbands than one[43].

Inheritance through the mother is widely in vogue in South India[44] and Madhya Pradesh[45]. So are matrilocal marriage and residence.

Ehrenfels is of the opinion that female domination in Indian society was wider and deeper than in any other country of the world. According to him, this system received a jolt, and was overthrown through the institutions of hypergamy, child marriage and *Sati* (burning of widows). The system was, however, so deep-rooted that, despite the above unfavourable factors, it survived among the aborigines and also some people of the civilised society, as shown above[46]. The great importance attached to women in Tantra, reminds one of the above system.

The cult of virgin goddess is, perhaps, the result of female superiority. The worship of Kanyákumári in the extreme South of India, whose shrine is mentioned in the *Periplus*, and the provision of *Kumári-pújá* in Tantric rites are reminiscent of the practice of looking upon women as powerful.

It may be added that the Aryans of hoary antiquity appear to have attached greater importance to women than to men. If we go deep into the significance of the words *pitá* and *mátá*, the designations of the two principal persons in the family, we find that the latter appears to have been more important. She is *ma-ta*, i.e., *nirmata* (the builder of the child) or one who measures the food for her child[47]. Thus, her function is vital, whereas *pita* (from root *pa-* to protect or rear) is so called as he protects or fosters the child (*palanat pita*)[48]; thus, the word does not hind at the father's role as the maker of the child.

In the Veda (R. V. X. 85-46), a bride is exhorted by the husband to be *samrájñi* in his house, having to look after her father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law.

In the *Manu-smrti* (ii. 45), the oldest and the most authoritative of the Smrtis, the mother is stated to excel a thousand fathers in point of honour.

All these attitudes seem to testify to the tradition of female superiority in the then society.

Sákta philosophy, in course of time, developed subtleties, and became complex. The basic elements of this philosophy are the following *36 Tattvas :* Siva, Sakti, Sadasiva, Isvara, Vidya, Máyá, Avidya, Kala, Raga, Kala, Niyati, Jiva, Prakrti, Manas, Buddhi, Ahamkára, Panca-tanmátra, Dasendriya, Pañcabhúta.

In Sakta philosophy, Siva is the Supreme principle. Though he is *Advaita* (non-dualistic), yet He is coupled with inherent Sakti. He is beyond all *gunas,* without desire, without vibration; yet He is *Saccidananda* (*Sat* — existent, *Cit* — consciousness, *Ananda* — bliss). He is *Nirvisesa* (without attributes). Sakti is the inherent power of Siva, which underlies creation. Sakti is the manifestation of Siva as the rays are of the sun, the burning power of fire and the effulgence of a jewel.

The internal *parináma* of Sakti consists in Sadásiva, Isvara, Vidya, etc. From *Máyá,* (illusion) the external *parináma* of Sakti, emanate the *Tattvas* up to five gross elements (*pañcabhuta*). The *Tattvas* from *Maya* to *Niyati* partake of the nature of both external and internal *parináma.*

Jiva, dependent on *Máyá, Avidya, Kálá, Rága, Kála* and *Niyati,* is nothing but a part of Siva, but covered by *Kañcukas* (fetters) and *Mala* (impurity). The gross body of Jiva is the *bhoga-deha* the basis of which is Prakrti. Thus, everything, from Siva to Jiva or created beings is dependent on Sakti. The manifestation of Sakti is sometimes dormant, sometimes like a dream, and at other times, grossly active, Sakti resides within the body as *Kundalini.*

Sákta sádhaná has Jiva at the centre. As stated above, Jiva is Siva, but covered with *Máyá,* subject to attachment and fate and full of suffering. *Sákta-sádhaná* aims at the redemption of *Jiva* from the clutches of suffering and establishing him in everlasting bliss and consciousness.

In order to reach this goal, the characteristics of the body of *Jiva* have been analysed. It is a microcosm with a legion

of veins and arteries which go on acting, and the internal vital breath continues to blow incessantly. There are, within the body, six lotus-like *Cakras* and one in the head; all these are stringed by the central nerve, *Susumna* which has one nerve on each side, the left one being called *Ida* and the right *Pingala*. The Supreme Siva resides in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the *Sahasrara* lotus at the apex. *Kundalini* being awakened, residing at the *Múládhára Cakra* at the base, begins the upward march; it gradually penetrates the *Cakras*, and finally reaches the *Sahasrara* where she is united with Siva resulting in perfect inexpressible bliss, the enjoyment of which is the *summum Bonum* of the aspirant's devotional life.

Sákta philosophy advocates *parináma-váda* according to which the unmanifest Sakti Herself is evolved as the manifest objects. In the *Nityasodsikarnava* (vi. 16), it is stated *ramate svayam avyakta tripura khyatimagata* or *vyaktimagata*.

The doctrine is also called *Satkáryaváda*, i.e., the effect inheres in the cause as the sprout in a seed.

According to Vedánta, the world is unconseious illusion. The illusion created by Brahman, who is the conscious principle, is false and devoid of consciousness.

According to Tantric philosophy, however, the power, *Máyá*, of the conscious Brahman, is also conscious as there is identity of the Saktimán and his Sakti.

The doctrine of *Sakti-parináma* is also called *Àbhasavada;* it is the manifestation of objects by the conscious principle which itself remains unaffected.

This *Sádhaná* is intimately connected with the *Tattvas* by crossing or obliterating which the aspirant is established in the ultimate *Tattva* of Siva.

The *Sádhaná* of Sakti has stages and its mode varies according to the propensity and capacity of the devotees. Equal place is accorded in it to *Jñána* (knowledge), *Karman* (action) and *Bhakti* (devotion), which are, in fact, rolled into one. Starting with *Bhakti*, it requires the aspirant to act in the

prescribed manner and, finally he rests with the knowledge of non-duality of Siva and Sakti. As stated in the introduction, depending on the nature and capability of the aspirant, there are seven modes (*ácára*). Of the aspirants, one with *Divyabhava* is the best. He is a votary of knowledge, (jñánayogin). For his *Sádhaná*, there is no need of an image, nor of external rites. Absorbed in *Antaryága*, he meditates upon Mother Goddess whose manifestation is the entire world. *Panca-makara* in it does not mean the gross substances, but has a spiritual significance, as has been indicated in the introduction. The attitude of such an aspirant has been declared as the best (*sarva-bhávottama*).

The *Sádhaná* for one, who is endowed with *Virabháva*, consisting in external rites and fast, etc., is extremely difficult as the aspirant has to face severe tests. Such a person resorts to the five *Makaras* in their gross forms, and *Sadhana* is performed in a cemetery or other lonely spots. If necessity arises, the person concerned resorts to the six Tantric acts of *Márana, Uccatana*, etc. Such a *Sádhaná*, as the name *Vira* suggests, befits one who is, indeed, a *Vira*, strong, fearless, self-controlled, activated by the inculcation of the power of *mantra*.

The worship of Tripura, Tripurásundari or Mahátripura-sundari, who is identified with *Pará-samvit* (Supreme Consciousness) which again is conceived as Brahman who is beyond the 36 *Tattvas*, is twofold, viz.,

Antaryága (internal) and *Bahiryága* (external). She is worshipped in three forms, viz., *Sthula, Suksma* and *Para*. In the first form, she has anthropomorphic traits, and is accessible to the eyes and hands of those possessed of *mantrasiddhi*. The second one, consisting in *mantra*, is comprehended by the ears and speech of the holy persons. The third form is comprehended by the mind of holy devotees.

The first and the third are *sarupa* and *arupa* respectively. The second one partaking of the nature of both is not considered separately.

In the external worship, different symbols of the Goddess are worshipped. Of these, *Srìyantra* or *Sricakra* is the best.

Sákta-sádhaná has been more hated than understood by the common run of people. Devotees of low propensities and vile mentality use it as a pretext and cover for self-indulgence. Hypocritical *gurus* exploit the naive and the gullible, and earn a living. Generally, Tantric rites are looked down upon by people, especially those who are staunch followers of the orthodox. Brahmanical religion, as encouraging levity, lecherousness and debauchery. In reality, however, *Sakti-sadhana* aims at the elevation of man from animality to; a spiritual height through the restrained enjoyment of worldly pleasures and not by their ascetic denial. Irrespective of caste or colour, everybody, male or female, can take to it to appease his or her spiritual hunger, while living a worldly life and not renouncing it. It synthesis all modes of approach, and aims at the single object of realising non-dualism so that there is no scope for communal discord or disharmony and narrowness.

There are pitfalls in this *Sadhaná* . But one who, resorting to a true *guru*, strives unwaveringly for the goal, can enjoy the bliss and the wealth of detachment by securing which one can do good to other people.

This topic may be concluded with a quotation of Sri Arabindo's conception of Sakti, as expressed in this celebrated work, *The Mother.* Says the savant:

Each of the worlds is nothing but one play of the Mahasakti of the system of worlds, who is there as the cosmic Soul and Personality of the transcendent Mother. Each is something that she has been in her vision, gathered into her heart of beauty and power and created in her, *Ànanda.*

Science in Tantra[49]

Many think that Tantras are merely speculative works, But, a careful study of Tantras reveals that some scientific elements are there. Some *siddhis* (powers) include seeing and hearing from afar, medical treatment from a great distance; these are

stated to be attainable through *Sádhaná.* It seems that these *siddhis* could accomplish what can be achieved now-a-days by means of television, radio, teletherapy, etc.

In Tantra, each deity has a particular colour. The Buddhas, in the *Dhyána* posture, are represented as having some colour or other. In regard to creation, Buddhist Tantra advocates the theory of *nihilism* (*Súnyaváda*). From this fact as well as from their knowledge of colours some think that Tantra-writers were aware of the light and its diffusion in the primordial state of the material world.

What is called cosmic ray was not, perhaps, unknown to them. The scientific basis of *Kundalini* is recognised by some Tantras, e.g., *Matrkábheda Tantra,* lay down a process of preparing mercury ash.

To medical science the contribution of Tantra appears to have been considerable. According to Tantra, the human body, the microcosm, is all important. To keep it fit not only various *asanas* were devised. Various drugs were also discovered for preservation of youth and virility. Medicines for curing diseases, rejuvenation and counteracting poisons were also invented.

The Tantric *Rasa* school of alchemy played a great role in the society.

The very names of the eight principal divisions of Ayurveda, viz. *Salyatantra, Salakyatantra, Kaya-cikitsa-tantra, Bhutavidya-tantra, Kumarabhrtya-tantra, Agada-tantra, Vaji-karana-tantra, Rasayana-tantra,* appear to hint at their Tantric origin.

These mean respectively healing of wounds and diseases of lower limbs through surgery, ointments and drugs; healing of wounds and diseases of upper limbs; healing of external and internal diseases of a general nature; dealing with mental diseases; dealing with diseases of children; toxicology; prescription for enchancing sexual vigour, etc.; science of chemical preparations for medicines and other purposes.

Some texts, dealing with *Rasayana,* still survive while others are known only from references.

A type of Tantric treatment, called *Avadhautika-cikitsa,* still survives in some parts of India.

Causes of Composition of Tantras[50]

Several factors lead to the composition of Tantras. The Vedas, followed by other works, were too learned for the people at large. The orthodox philosophical systems were too abstruse for them. The ritualistic works prescribed rites and rituals too elaborate and requiring rigorous discipline and meticulous attention to details. The Smrti works denied the right to the performance of important religious rites to Súdras and women. The Buddhists advocated asceticism. The Brahmanical works taught renunciation as the highest ideal in life.

Thus, the need was gradually felt for easier works laying down doctrines more intelligible to common people, prescribing less complicated practices and giving freedom of religious rites to Súdras and women.

The result was the composition of Tantras.

These works hold that the practices and precepts, taught in the Veda, are too difficult for our age. Instead of rigorous asceticism and renunciation, the Tantras allow people to follow their natural propensities like drinking wine, enjoying women, etc. *Mukti* (salvation) is possible through *bhukti* (enjoyment). While self-mortification was advocated by the orthodox Sastras, the Tantras laild stress on the preservation of the body and the maintenance of health. In fact, the body was regarded as a microcosm; what is not in the body is not in the universe. The body is the best means of *sadhana.* Tantra holds that the body contains the highest power which can make one capable of controlling the universal energy.

Literary Value of Tantra

Tantra is partly philosophical, partly ritualistic. So, we cannot expect much literary value in it. But, it must be admitted that Tantra supplied some themes to later writers not only in

Sanskrit, but also in vernacular literatures.

In the analysis of human psychology and in the depiction of the condition of human beings, deluded by wrong ideas and subjected to suffering of various kinds, Tantra excites our admiration and pity.

The *Sáktánanda-tarangini* (I) of Brahmánanda of Bengal beautifully expresses the miserable condition of human beings suffering from sin, attachment to worldly objects and consumed by the fire of hostility or hatred :

pápa-súla-vinirbhinnam siktam visaya-sarpisá /

rágadvesanalaih pakvam-mrtyur-asnáti mánevam //

Death devours man who is pierced by the spear of sin, wetted by the clarified butter in the form of the objects of sense and cooked by the fire of attachment and animosity.

No less attractive from the literary point of view are the hint, contained in Tantra, at mystic practices based on the biological relationship of man and woman and the ensuing feeling which beggars description.

Tántric *Savasádhana, Latásádhana,* human sacrifice, offer of human blood to the goddess, the grotesque and hideous practices of some Tántric sects, etc., have motivated some later writers in their portayal of literary pictures evoking the sentiments of *Bibhatsa* (disgust) *Bhayánaka* (fierce) and Adbhuta (marvellous). We have dealt with Tantric elements in literature in a separate chapter.

Poetic beauty flashes at some places of the Tántra literature. For example, the description of the six *Cakras* like lotuses of varying colours and varying number of petals. Some *mudrás* and *mandalas* are artistic both in conception and description. Some Tántric scholars appear to have had poetic ability of no mean order in their description of Kundalini and the thousand-petalled lotus supposed to be within the head. These pen-pictures are beautiful in their use of figures of speech and the mode of expression.

Tantra poetically conceived *Idá* and *Pingalá* as the moon and the sun respectively. The following description of *Susumna* calls up a vivid imagery:

Vidyunmála-vilása munimanasi lasattantu-rupasusúksmá — Resplendent like a garland (or a series) of lightnings it is, in the mind of the sage, extremely slender like a shining thread.

The following description of *Kundalini* is a piece of fine poetry:

> *tasyorddhe visa-tantu-sodara-lasat-suksma jaganmohini*
> *brahma-dvara-mukham mukhena madhuram sacchadayanti-svayam*
> *Samkhavartanibha navina-capalamala-vilasaspada*
> *supta sarpasama sivopari lasat-sardha-trivrttakrtih //*
> *kujanti kulakundalini ca madhuram mattali-sphutam*
> *vacah komala-kavya-bandha-racana bhedati-bheda-kramaih*
> *sa mulambuja-gahvare vilapati proddama-diptavolli //*
>
> *Satcakra-nirupana*, 11-12.

Above it, the enchanter of the world, shining and slender like a lotus-fibre, having covered the Brahmadvara with its face, lies asleep, like the circular marks on conch-shell and with three and a half coils like a serpent, on Siva. Composing fine poems in various metres, humming sweetly like intoxicated bees and sustaining the life of a creature in exhalation and inhalation, She shines like a series of very powerful lights in the cavity of the lotus in the shape of *Múládhára*.

Pictorial effect is charming in the description of the *Sahasrára* which has thousand petals, which is white like the full moon, in which the pollens are beautiful like the newly risen sun, which is decorated with divine trees eternally bearing flowers and fruits.

The following lines graphically present the image of Àdyá-devi before our minds' eyes:

> *Megháṅgim sasi-sekharám trinayanám raktambaram bibhratim pánibhyám ahayam varamca vikasad-raktaravinda-sthitam nrtyantam purato nipiya madhuram madhvika-madyam mahá-kálam viksya vikásitá-nanavarám ádyám bhaje kálikám //*
>
> *Mahanirvana-tantra*, V

(I worship Àdyá Káli; Her body is like cloud, She is moon-crested, three-eyed, clad in red cloth. In her two hands, there are the poses of boon and freedom fear. Standing on a red lotus, She has Her face laughing at the sight of Mahakala who, having drunk Madhvika wine[51], is dancing before her.)

The following description can compare favourably with a verse of any good poem.

> *Vahanti sinduram prabala-kavaribhara-timira*
> *dvisam vrndair-vandikrtam iva navinarka-kiranam /*
> *tanotu ksemam nastava vadana-saundarya-lahari*
> *parivaha-srotah saranir iva simanta-saranih //*
>
> (*Saundarya-lahari*, verse 44)

(O Goddess, may that parting line of your hair, which looks like the overflowing watercourse of the wave of the beauty of your face, which (i.e., parting line), being smeared with vermilion, it seems as though the morning sun captivated by the darkness in the form of the mass of hairs of the enemy.)

> *lasat-samkha-cakra-calat-khadga-bhima*
> *nadat-simhavaha-jvalat-tungamaulih /*
> *dravad daityavarga stavat siddha-samgha*
> *tvamevesi durgapi sargadihine //*
>
> *Prapancasara-tantra*, attributed to Samkaracarya

(O goddess, you Durga, too devoid of creation, etc., have a shining conch and a disc, you are fierce with a moving sword, have your lion-mount roaring, your high head is bright, from you the host of demons are running away, a group of Siddhas are eulogising you; you are indeed the Supreme Goddess. A vivid description in the malodious *Bhujaṅga-prayáta* metre.

There are also instances of artificial and laboured composition which characterises Sanskrit poetry of the decadent period. While such compositions testify to the learning of the author, these are jejune and as insipid as poetical pieces. In the following lines, every word commences with the letter *Ka* which is the initial letter in '*Káli*' and the first consonant of the alphabet.

Kamalá Káli-darpaghni Kapardisa Krpánvitá,

Káliká Kálamátá ca Kálánala-samadyutih /

Tantra Beyond India

We do not know whether *Tantra* was imported into India or exported from this country to other countries. Tantric influence is, however, clear far beyond the limits of India. China and Tibet are the two most prominent places beyond India, which reveal the influence of Tantra. Several Sanskrit Tantras are preserved only in Chinese and Tibetan translations, the original works being lost. Evidences are available that Tantric philosophers and scholars from India visited the above countries.

Goddess *Tárá*, in her Buddhist garb, got a niche in the pantheon of Tibet where she is known as Sgral-ma or Dol-ma. Many forms of the deity have been conceived.

The *Tárá* cult travelled also to China as Sakti of Avalokitesvara. It is interesting to note that, under the pre-Buddhist Taoism and Confucianism, which recognised Mother Goddess as the representative of Yin (Female principle), *Avalokitesvara*[52] was transformed into a goddess. By the 7th and 8th century A.D., Tara was completely merged with Avalokitesvara who lost his male character, and was transmuted into goddess Kuan-yin of China.

The double form of *Tárá* became very popular in that country. Gradually Taoist rituals made their way into the Tara Cult and Yinism or Exaltation of the Female Principle in Taoism.

This, in its turn, influenced Indian *Vámácára* in both its Buddhistic and Hindu forms.

P. C. Bagchi has sought to identify *Mahácinatárá* with Ekajata[53]. Siddha Nágárjuna is said to have recovered the Ekajata cult in Tibet.

The description of Ekajatá[54] is similar to that of Mahácina-krama-tárá.[55]

The Hindu pantheon has the following goddesses corresponding to the above divinities:

Tárá, Ugratárá, Ekajatá, Maha-Nila-Sarasvati.

It should be noted that the *dhyánas* of these goddesses, occurring in Hindu Tantra, agree verbatim with those found in Buddhist Tantra.

The *Sammoha-tantra* states that Nila-Sarasvati or Ugratárá was born in the lake, called Cola, on the west of Meru which was a part of *Cinadesa*.

Bagchi is of the opinion that Cola is, perhaps, to be connected with the Kol or Col, the common word for lake Kul or Col, found with the names of many lakes to the west and north of T'ien-shan in Mongolia.

At least four Tantras, viz., *Sirascheda, Vinásikha, Sammoha* and *Nayottara* are known from the inscription of Sdak-Kak-Thom to have been introduced into Kambuja (Combodia) about 800 A.D.[56]. The Royal High Priest, Simkaivalya, is stated to have been initiated to Tantra by a Brahmana, named Hiranya-dama.

Some other Cambodian inscriptions refer to the *Saiva Tantras, Saivágama*. An Angkorvat inscription refers to the *Paramesvara-tantra*.

Images of the Tantric Ganesa have been found in Cambodia.

Mongolia and Japan are some of the other countries where Tantra was introduced. Of the Tántric work, *Ganapati-tattva*, an old Javanese text only is available.

In the Myson inscription (5th Cent. A.D.) of Champa, there is salutation to Mahesvara and Umá. Images of Devi are found in various places in Champá. She is variously called Matrlingestara,

Gauri, Mahadevi, etc.

In Java, images of Siva, both in his calm and furious aspects, have been found. In the Furious aspect, he is called Bhairava. Sakti also appears in two aspects. In the Batavia Museum, there are some images of Mahisamardini. The Sakti of Bhairava or Mahakala is Bhairavi or Mahakali. She is seated on a corpse with human skulls in her neck and head and a garland of human skulls on her body[57].

The image of Ganesa, found in Java, shows the deity seated on human skulls which leave no doubt about His Tantric character.

Tantra and Timaeus[58]

Certain striking similarities are noticeable between Tantra and *Time* (*Timaeus*) of Plato (428-348 B.C.).

Plato speaks to two conduits on two sides of the vertebral column. These appear to be similar to the Tantric *Ida* and *Pingala* on the two sides of the *Susumná*.

Plato conceives the earth as a cube, fire as a triangular pyramid, air as octahedral and water as icosahedral. These appear to correspond to the Tántric *mandalas* which are square, triangle, two equilateral triangles, one upon the other, crescent noon; ether is represented by a circle[59].

The above similarities might be accidental coincidence, though the possibility of the one country influencing the other cannot be ruled out. Cultural contact between India and Greece dates back to a period much anterious to Alexnder's invasion (327-26 BC).

Tantra and Christianity

According to C. Eliot, there are some parallelisms between Tantric and Christian rituals. Even in the Anglican Chruch, sprinkling of water is an essential part of the ceremony of baptism; this practice is similar to Tántric *Abhiseka*. The sign of the Christian cross resembles Tantric *nyasa*, according to

Woodroffe. Baptism includes a formula similar to Tantric *mantra*. Baptism is supposed to ensure life in heaven, whereas the unbaptised have a dubious future. Similarly, Tantra believes in the attaintment of the spiritual end through physical means. In the Roman Chruch, the rite includes exorcism and the use of salt, oil and lights. This is very much like similar practices in Tantra.

Tantra and Jews

Like the followers of Tantra, the adherents of the *Kabbah* doctrine of the Jews believe in the mystic power of letters, magic, amulets, the unity of microcosm and macrocosm, etc. These ideas probably passed from India to Egypt whence they spread about the ninth century over Europe. Indo-European contacts, long before the above date, have been proved.

Was Tantra of Foreign Origin ?

India had commercial, cultural and religious contact with many foreign countries, eastern and western, in very remote times.

The relics of Indus Valley Civilisation (C. 3000 B.C.) reveal pottery, etc., which tend to indicate links with Sumeria and Mesopotamia.

India's contact with foreign countries was not a one-way traffic. There was a give-and-take relation between this country and the foreign lands. Besides trade and commerce, Buddhism was a potent factor fostering extraterritorial contacts. In the realm of art and architecture, India had some links with certain foreign countries.

Among the Asiatic neighbors, India came into contact with China, repository of a very old civilisation, particularly in the post-Buddhistic period, but long before Christ.

That Chinese silk was imported into India, and was very popular is amply borne out by literary references.

Buddhism strengthened the ties between India and China.

Contrary to the general impression that Fa-hien was the first Chinese to get himself interested in Buddhism, and to come to India as a place of pilgrimage, several Chinese came to this country before him.

Some Buddhist Sanskrit works, particularly on Tantra, exist only in Chinese translation, the original works being lost.

In connexion with Tantra Beyond India, we have referred to Chinese Taoism and Indian Tantra. The Chinese recognised the Male and Female principles respectively as *Yang* and *Yin* as underlying the creation. This naturally led to the sexual rites. The Chinese recognise *Hisen* (immortality) through certain disciplinary practices which include (1) regulation of respiration, (2) gymnastic technique, (3) sexual technique, (4) alchemical and pharmaceutical technique, etc. These have parallels in Tantra also. For example, the respiratory practice corresponds to *Pranayama,* the gymnastic technique to *hatha-yoga* and *Káyasádhana.* Alchemical technique has close similarity with Indian Tantric system which produced several works on alchemy. The sexual practice, as we have seen, is a very important factor in Indian Tántric rites. While Parallelisms do not conclusively prove borrowing on any side, yet the tradition of Chinese influence on Tantra, *Cinacara,* etc. seems to be rendered probable by the above similarities.

Besides China, with many other Asiatic countries India came into contact through trade and commerce as well as Buddhism, e.g. Babylon.

The land of Snow, Tibet, became very familiar to India thanks to the adventures of Sarat Das (1849-1917) who, defying the restrictions imposed by the mighty British Raj, and braving the inhospitable weather and the hazardous mountain route, went over to that country, and wrote an illuminating monograph on it.

Centuries ago, cultural and commercial intercourse began between these two countries. Like China, Tibet also looked upon India, the birthplace of the revered Lord Buddha, as a place of pilgrimage. Many Buddhist scholars of India not only

went to Tibet, but also settled there, and wrote many treatises in Sanskrit, especially relating to Tantric Buddhism. The originals of many of such works have been lost; their Tibetan translations survived in the *Tanjur.* Of the galaxy of Indian scholars, who chose Tibet as the land of their scholarly activities, many were from Bengal. Among the Bengali scholars again, the most renowed was Dipankara Srijnana Atisa (980 or 982-1053 or 1054) who, at the importunate request of the then Tibetan ruler, visited (1042) that land for reforming the delinqunt Tibetan society and the degenerated Buddhist religion there. He lived there till his death.

The deep interest of Tibet in India is reflected in Lama Taranatha's (b. 1573) learned *History of Buddhism in India* (1607 or 1608 AD).

There is enough of evidence of close Indo-Egyptian contact since pre-Christian times. The *Chándogya Upanisad* (viii. 8.5) seems to refer to mummification; perhaps it refers to the Egyptian practice. Egyptian colonies were set up in India and Indian colonies in Egypt. Among other things from India, Indian women were a part of the procession of the Egyptian monarch, Ptolemy. The pleasure-boat of Ptolemy Philopatore (221 B.C.) was decorated with Indian gems. The symbols of a wheel and trident over a grave appear to be mute witness to Indian influence. An Indian idol, discovered at Memphis, testifies to the same influence. An important pointer to this fact is an Indian's dedication[60], to the deity Pan, of a temple of Rhodesia on the desert-route towards the red Sea. Hultzsch informs us that a silver-coin of an Egyptian King, Ptolemy was discovered in a market of Bangalore.

From Pliny we learn that the Egyptian king, Ptolemy II (285-247 B.C.) sent an envoy to an Indian king.

India's contact with foreign countries in Asia, Europe and Africa has been discussed. We shall examine whether or not Tantrism of India was borrowed from external sources.

From what we have seen about Sino-Indian ties, Chinese influence on Indian Tantra is not unlikely.

Woodroffe (Avalon) does not subscribe to the theory that the fundamental principles of Tantra were imported into India from China. The pro-China theorists point out, among other things, that the *Rudrayámala,* a noted Tantra, mentions China. Buddha (Buddhist doctrine) was established there.

The sage Vasistha is stated to have been initiated to *Pancatattva* by the Buddha himself. The same story occurs in the *Tárátantra* where the sage is stated to have brought home the cult of *Mahácina-kramácára* providing for the worship of *Mahácìnatárá.*

The above story appears, with a little variation, in the *Brahma-yamala* (Patala I).

Apart from the mythical nature of the story, a few points are significant. It should be noted that Vasistha was a Vedic sage. He at first characterises *Cincara* rites as *Vedavahiskrta* (opposed to the Veda). Vasistha's conversion to Tantrism appears to be the symbolical expression of the fusion of Vedism or orthodox Brahmanism and Tantrism.

The reference to Vasistha's performance of Tárá rituals in milacarra, the seat of Kámákhyá, may hint at Assam as the homeland of Tantra. A Vasistháśrama near Gauhati seems to confirm this impression. The words TA-RA, RU-D-RA, used in Tantra, are believed to be loan-words from the Chinese language.

Another argument, though not very convincing, in support of Chinese origin, is that the flower *Javá,* regarded as highly suitable in Sakti worship, is called Chinese rose.

There is a work called *Mahácinácára-tantra.*

China may or may not have been the original homeland of Tantra. The fact, however, remains that Tantric doctrines and rites were widely prevalent, for a long time, in the region called Mahacina. It is identified with Arabia Felix (i.e. Aden) by some, with China by others.

The pro-China theorists put forward some more arguments. The mystic syllables *hrìm, krìm,* etc., regarded as so important

in Tántric practices, show the predominance of the nasal sound, a characteristic of the Chinese language[61]. The Tantric diagrams (*Yantra, Mandala*) remind one of the pictorial writing of the Chinese alphabet. A mode of Tantric *Sadhana* is called *Cinacara* which, according to the *Taratantra,* came from Mahacina.

The Female Energies (Yoginis), mentioned in Brahmanical Tantras, include Lámá[62]. In Tibetan, it is Lhamo or Shedevil. This word has been taken to denote Devi or Sakti. The *Jayadratha-yamala* mentions twenty-four types of Lamas.

The words Dákini, Hákini, Sákini and Lákini,[63] etc., are also exotic, and appear to point to their foreign origin.

The *Sammoha-tantra* mentions that Tantric culture of foreign lands like Bhalika (Balkh), Kiráta, Bhota (Tibet), Cina, Mahácina, Párasìka (Persia), Airáka (Iraq), Kamboja, Húna, Yavana, Gandhara and Nepala. May be that these countries had some esoteric practices known by Indians as similar to their Tantric practices; borrowing on any side cannot be established.

According to the Tibetan *Pag Sam Jon-Zan,* Buddhist Tantra originated in Uddiyana[64]. According to B. Bhattacharya, Vajrayana Tantra arose in Uddiyána[65]. This place (also written as Oddiyana, Odryána) is identified by some with Udyana in or near the Swat Valley, while others place it in Kashgarh. Haraprasad Sastri and some other scholars locate it in Orissa, while others think that it was a part of Bengal.

Lokesh Chandra thinks that Oddiyana was the name of Kanci.

In considering the probability of foreign influence on Tantra, we should think of one thing. Of Kámarúpa, Púrnagiri, Uddiyana and Jalandhara, as many as three are situated on long roads connecting India with foreign countries. Kamarupa had been a centre of foreign activities from very remote times.

The location of the above *Sákta-Pìthas* may indicate either foreign influence on Tantra or the passing of Tantric ideas to the foreign countries.

Some scholars think that the conception and worship of Sakti is un-Indian. Thus, Tantra is exotic.

H. P. Sastri, on the basis of a verse[66] in the *Kubjikámata-tantra*, believed that Tantra was of foreign origin. He thought that the idea of Sakti, the worship of which is the kernel of Tantra, was borrowed from Western Asia from where it was brought by the Magi priests of the Seythians.

Woodroffe is of the opinion that Tantra was imported from ancient Chaldea, the region around which, according to him, was Sákadvipa of Indian tradition[67]. In this connection, it is interesting to note that Goddess Nana-Nina, Nansia-Inanna, who was originally the city-goddess of Urk, was, at a later time, identified with the mother of Attis and the Iranian Anatita. The cult of this Goddess spread to India. Her name is found on the coins of the Kusána period. Naina Devi of Kulu Valley, Naini Devì of Nainital etc. are instances of the influence of the goddess of the Nana group.

According to a Tibetan tradition, Tántric principles and practices were introduced by the Buddhist Asanga into India. P. V. Kane does not attach much importance of this tradition based as it is mainly on the *History of Buddhism* by Taranatha (b. 1573 or 1575) who wrote over one thousand years after Asanga.

Some seek to establish the foreign origin of Tantra on the ground that the exalted position, accorded in Tantra to *Guru*, has nothing comparable in the Veda and Purána. Others rejects this theory on the ground that a high place of honour is given to *Guru* in the *Nirukta* (ii. 4), *Svetasvatara Upanisad* (vi. 18. 23), *Lingapurana, Devibhagavata*, etc. It may be noted that the *Mahabharata* (present from C. 4th cent. A.D. / mentions *guru* as a highly respectable person.

Towards the end of the 19th cent. and the beginning of the 20th., many people believed that the cult of Mother Goddess originated in Phrygia and spread in different countries. This led B. Bhattacharya to postulate the theory of the foreign origin of Sakti worship[68].

After examining the different views, P. V. Kane concludes that certain mystic practices like *Kulacara, Vamacara* might have been borrowed from outside, but there is no conclusive evidence of Tantra having been borrowed in toto from foreign countries. On the contrary, he thinks that Tantric doctrines migrated to foreign countries, notably China and Tibet. P. C. Bagchi puts forward[69] some evidences of foreign elements in Tantric doctrines.

Against the view that Tantra was borrowed by India from outside, it may be pointed out that, whereas many Sanskrit Tantras were translated into Chinese or Tibetan, there is no evidence of any Tantric work of these places having been translated into Sanskrit.

In discussing the question of Chinese influence on Tantra, we should consider the point of similarity between the Taoism of China and the Tantra of India[70].

The Taoist doctrine revolves round the pivotal concept of *yang* and *yin*. The former is the Male positive power of light and heat, and the latter the Female negative power of darkness. The harmonisation of these two powers is believed to enable and cold. These two underlie everything in life and being man to transcend his physical limits, to reach the spiritual plane to acquire preternatural powers and even to achieve immortality in this very life. For acquiring mudane immorality (*H Sien*), the following practices[71] are necessary:

(i) respiratory exercise, (ii) heliotherapeutic techniques, (iii) gymnastics in the prescribed form, (iv) disciplined sexual intercourse, (v) alchemical and pharmaceutical techniques, (vi) regulated diet.

A comparison of the above with the principles of Tantra clearly reveals close similarity. Tantric philosophy has the central principles of Siva (Male) and Sakti (Female).

Physical and mental disciplines are ordained in Tantra, too, for acquiring superhuman powers, physical fitness and longevity; in fact, Tantra looks upon the human body as a microcosm so that good health is a *sine qua non* in Tantric Sadhana. The

respiratory exercise, advocated in Taoism, has its parallel in Tántric *pránáyáma*. The heliotherapeutic technique of the former has its Indian counterpart in a series of solar rituals. The gymnastic techniques of Taoism are matched by Tántric *Hathayoga* and *Káyasádhana*. Stress on dietary is common to both. The alchemical-pharmaceutical techniques are found in both the systems; in India we have several works on Tantric alchemy. It is significant that, according to tradition, Bhoga (Bogar in Tamil), a Chinese Taoist founded a sect of the South Indian Tantric *Siddhas* (*Sittar* in Tamil) who cultivated alchemy vigorously.

The emphasis on sexual practices is remarkably similar in Taoism and Tántrism.

The *Sammoha-tantra* states that, in China alone, there are one hundred major Tantras and seven minor Tantras (*Upatantráni*).

Some scholars[72] have pointed out the similarity of the word Tara, name of an important Tantric goddess, with the name of Astarte or Ishtar or Ashtaroth, the renowned Mother Goddess of Western Asia, though no definite conclusion can be drawn about the influence of one on the other.

In considering foreign influence on Tantra, it deserves notice that, according to the *Sammoha-tantra*, goddess Nila-Sarasvati approved at a place supposed to have been included in Mongolia[73].

It is curious that the ancient religious systems of many countries, especially those systems in which the cult of Mother Goddess played a vital role, reveal beliefs and practices similar, to a great extent, to those in Indian Tantric cults[74]. As instances, we may cite the galli of the Syrian Mother Goddess, Astarte of Hierapolis, the Eleusinian and Phrygian.

Phrygian mysteries, the Dinonysian rites, the Marian secrets, etc. Secret forms of worship, resembling Tántric rites, prevailed in Phrygia, Syria, Lydia, Cappadocia, Pontus and Galatia, in all these regions the cult of Mother Goddess was popular.

Promiscuous sexual intercourse was a feature of a Greek festival in honour of the goddesses, Demeter and Persephone. The rituals connected with the union of Cybele and Attis, Aphrodite and Adonis, Ishtar and Tammuz, Demeter and Zeus, were marked by sex-rites.

Frazer tells us[75] about the fact that Mother Goddess, symbolising the reproductive energies of nature, was worshipped, under different names, by many peoples of West Asia.

Hogarth describes[76] how pervasive was the worship of Mother Goddess in Asia Minor and around the Mediterranean.

R. P. Chanda points out[77] the similarity of Sakti cult with the modes of worship of the female deity in Asia Minor, Syria.

Footnotes

1. See *Rudrayamala*, Uttara II, *Kularnava* XI, XII XIII XIV, XVIII, *Pranatosini* II. 2. III.1, VI.4, *Kularnava* XIII *Tantra-raja* I. *Gandharva* VI, XXVI, *Saradatilaka* II, esp. II. 143-44 (Raghava's comm.), *Mahanirvana* X.200-01, XV.139 *Prapancasara* XXXVI,

   Krsnananda's *Tantrasara*, p. 3, *Kamakhya-tantra* IV, *Kaulavalinirnaya* X, *Parasuramakalpasutra* X. 75 (Ramesvara's comm).
2. See *Kularnava*, XI, XIV *Rudrayamala*, Uttara, II *Prapancasara* XXXVI. 50, Krsnananda's *Tantrasara* p. 3. *Saradatilaka*, II 745-50, 153 *Tontraraja* I. 23-24, *Rudrayamala*, Uttara II, *Kularnava* XII *Kaulavalinirnaya* X *Parasuramakalpasutra* X.74.
3. See *Pranatosini* II. 4, p. 118, *Kularnava*, XIV.
4. See *Saradatilaka* IV.1 (Raghava's comm), *Pranatosini*-II 5, p. 143, *Saktisamgama*, Kali XI, 29-37.
5. Names of some South Indian ladies, not necessarily Tantric *Sadhikas*, end in — *amba*, e,g, Ramachadramba, Tirumalamba, etc.
6. For details, see *Sastramulak Bharatiya Saktisadhana* (in Bengali), 1st ed., Chap-14.

7. See *Pranatosini.*
8. See Glossary.
9. See *Pranatosini*, II.4.
10. See Glossary.
11. Ibid.
12. W. Crooke in *Jour of Anthropological Institute.* XXVII, p-246.
13. B. Thomson, *The Fizians,* p. 16.
14. B. Spencer and F. Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia,* p. 401.

    A.W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of S. E. Australia,* p. 530.
15. H. Webster, *Primitive Secret Societies,* pp. 34-35, 49-66.
16. See Chattopadhyay, *Lokayata,* p. 485ff.; N.N. Bhattacharya, *Ancient Indian Rituals,* pp. 78-80.
17. As described by P. V. Kane.
18. The *Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism,* 1895, pp. 336-337.
19. IA, vols. xxvi, 1987, pp. 24-25.
20. See P. V. Kane, *Hist. of Dharmsastra,* V. pt. 2, 1962, p. 1129.
21. See A. Coomaraswamy, *Buddha and Gospel of Buddha* for its representation in Ceylon (18th cent. AD) Grunwedel, *Buddhist Art in India.* (Trs. A. C. Gibson), figure 126, B. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Iconography,* plate XXVIII; N. K. Bhattashali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sulptures*, plate VIII.
22. See N. K. Bhattashali, *op; cit.,* plates XX, XXI.
23. See P. Shah in *Jour. of Oriental Institute,* vol. vi, No. 1, pp. 1-35.
24. For *Sava-sadhana* according to Bengali writers, see Chapter on Bengal Tantra.
25. See *Kaulavali-nirnaya,* VIII, 76; *Kularnava,* xi, 79, 84, 85; *Tantraja-tantra,* XXXV 6.
26. *Sadhanamata,* II, p. 505.

27. For instance, the *Nitasodasikarnava* (I. 13022) mentions 64 Tantras. See Tantra in the lexicon, *Sabdakalpadruma.* The *Saundarya-lahari,* attributed to Samkara-carya, the great *Advaita* philosopher, also mentions 64 Tantras in verse 31.
28. See Chapter on Kali.
29. Its conception of Sakti is set forth in the following lines (i. 7.42):

    tvam saktireva jagatam akhilaprabhava

    tvannimittam ca sakalam khalu bhavamatram /

    tvam kridase nija-vinirmita-mohajale

    natye yatha viharate svakrte natovai //

    You, the omnipotent one, are indeed Sakti of the world. You are the cause of everything. You sport in the web of delusion created by you, as an actor in the dramatic representation created by himself.
30. See *Bahvrcopanisad,* p. 62.
31. See *Ency. of Rel. and Ethics,* V, p. 828.
32. *Adonis, Attis Osiris,* p.p. 394-95.
33. *Ibid,* p. 393.
34. *The Mothers,* II, p. 251.
35. *Aschylus and Athens,* pp. 15-16.
36. R. C. Majumdar, *Classical Accounts of India,* p. p. 222-223, 456-458.
37. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's etc.,* I. p. 330.
38. *Ibid,* II, p. 257.
39. C. A. Sherring, *Western Tibet,* p. 338.
40. *Kamasutra,* Vangavasi ed., p. 358.
41. A. play-fair, the *Garos,* p. p. 80 f.f.
42. P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis,* p. p. 62 f.f.
43. E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India,* V, pp. 294-323; L.K.A.K.Iyer, *Cochin Tribes and Castes,* II, p. 49; K. M. kapadia, *Marriage and Family in India,* pp. 386 f.f.

44. Iyer, *op. cit,* I. pp. 28-29, 76, 98.

Thurston, *op. cit.* II. pp. 66, 296, III, pp. 33, 74, etc.; IV, pp. 350, etc., VII, p. 163; H. V. Nanjundayya and Iyer, *Mysore Tribed and Castes,* II. pp. 3, 7, 108; III, pp. 149, 247, etc., IV, pp. 10, 138, 422.

45. R. V. Russell, *Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India,* II. p. 224; III, pp. 1-39, 299, 394, IV, 65, 187, 408.

46. O. R. Ehrenfels, *Mother-right in India,* pp. 18, f.f., 121-129, 201-4.

47. The root *ma* may means to build or to measure.

48. Kalidasa, while referring to the good qualities of a king, says — *prajanam vinayadhanad raksanad bharanadapi sa pita*; for training, protecting and maintaining the subjects, he was their father. (*Raghuvansa,* i. 24).

49. See B. Bhattacharya, Scientific Background of Buddhist Tantras, *IHQ,* xxxii, Nos. 2, 3. For scientific basis of *Kundalini-Yoga,* see G. Krishna, *Biological basis of Religion and Genius* and its intro. by Weizsacker.

50. See G. Krishna, *op. cit.*

51. Spirituous liquor, distilled from the flowers of the *Madhuka* tree or from grapes.

52. See S. K. Chatterjee, *JAS,* I, 1959, p. 180.

53. See *Sadhanamala,* No. 127.

54. *Ibid,* Nos. 123-128.

55. *Ibid,* Nos. 100, 101.

56. See *Bulletin de Ecole Francaise....Orient,* XV, pp. 70-71; B. R. Chatterji, *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia,* pp. 273-74.

For influence of Tantra in the Far East, see P. C. Bagchi's *Studies in Tantras*; R. C. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Kambuja* and *JAS,* 1950. Also see S. C. Banerji's *Sanskrit Beyond India,* p. 24.

It is interesting to note that some symbols in the natural caverns of Palaeolithic Europe (C. 20,000 B.C.) resemble those still used by the Tantraikas. See P. Rawlinson, *Tantra,* p. 7. See Bergaignna, *Inscription de Campa et der Cambodya,* II, 157, 384, 389-92.

57. See R. C. Majumdar, *Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East,* II, pp. 2, pp. 102-103.

58. On the topics, see J. Fillizat, *Classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine,* pp. 234-35.

59. See A. Avalon, *Tantraic Texts,* Vol. III.

60. See Charlesworth, *Trade-routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire,* p. 59.

61. See *Matrkabheda-tantra,* Patala 12.

62. See G, Tucci, *JASB* NS, LXXVI, 1930, pp. 55ff. Lama (Tibetan *Bla-ma*) generally denotes scholar. Here, however, it refers to a group of experts who had their own esoteric and mystic practices, It was believed that association with them ensures spiritual progress. These Lamas are also known as *Rupika* (assuming different forms during intercourse with men) and *Cumbika* (Kissing men at the very first meeting). See P. C. Bagchi, *Studies in Tantras,* pp. 49-50.

63. These were originally human females, and later on elevated to the status of divinities. For instance, in Western Tibet, a class of sorcerers and witches, called Lha-K'a, led to the rise of the designation Lakini. Sakini is believed to have been derived from Sakas (Scythian) and Dakini from Dags (people of Dagistan).

64. See P. C. Bagchi, *Studies in the Tantras,* pp. 37-40. Grosset, *In the footsteps of the Buddha,* pp. 109-110; *IHQ,* XI, pp. 142-144; B. Bhattacharya, Intro. to *Buddhist Estoerism,* p. 46.

65. Intro. to Buddhist Esoterism, p. 46. *Sternbach Felicitation Volume,* I, p. 491 ff.

66. *gaccha tvam bhasrate varse adhikarayu sarvatah /*

pithepithe ksetresmin kuru srstimanekadha //

See *Nepal Catalogue*

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67. See A. Avalon, *Mahanirvana Tantra,* 3rd Ed., p. 560.

68. See B. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Esoterism,* p. 43 2. See H. P. Sastri, *Notices of Skt. MSS,* 2nd Series, I, XXXII, p. 152; Prof. S.K. Chatterjee, *JAS,* I, 1959, p. 113; S. Levi, *Nepal,* I, p. 346; Woodroffe, *Sakti & Sakta,* 8th ed., p. 123.
69. *Studies in Tantra,* p. p. 45-55. Also see Bagchi in IHQ, vii, 193 f.f.
70. On this question, see S. K. Chatterji in *JAS,* I. 1959, P. 104; 113; Goez in *ABOR,* 36, 1955, p.p. 133ff; J. Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China,* II, *pp. 149-51,* 425-28.
71. See J. Needham, *op. cit.*
72. See N. N. Bhattacharya, *History of Tantraic religion,* p. 104.
73. See our observations in this regard under Tantra Beyond India.
74. See N. N. Bhattacharya's book, *op-cit,* pp. 87ff.
75. See *Adonis Attis Osiris,* pp. 34-35.
76. See *Ency. of Religion and Ethics,* I, p. 147.
77. See *Indo-Aryan Races,* pp. 148-49.

Chapter-3

Vedic Origin of Tántric Practices

Chapter-3

Most of the scholars are of the view that the religion of the Tantras is quite distinct from that of the Vedas. Some occult practices prescribed in the Tantras, in particular, are said to be quite opposed to the path prescribed in the Vedas. Some scholars, on the other hand, hold that the Tántric religion is not different from the Vedic religion. In reality, however, the Tantras are of two types: some are pro-Vedic and some are non-Vedic.[1] Accordingly, the Tántric practices are also of two types-pro-Vedic and non-Vedic. This position can be supported by the fact that the philosophical ideas and practices found in some Tantras, such as, the *Kúlarnava-Tántra*, the *Mahdnirvana-Tantra*, the *Prapañca-sara* etc. bear remarkable similarities with those of the Vedas. Some of the Tantras of this group claim to have originated from the Vedas. The *Kulárnava-Tantra* says that the Tántric path is the essence of the Vedic religion.[2] In the view of Bháskararaya, the Tantras contain the essence of the *Upanisads*. On the other hand, practices prescribed in some tantras, such as, the *Yoni-Tantra*, the *Kumári-Tantra*, the *Niruttara-Tantra*, the *Gupta-sádhana-Tantra* etc. seem to be very far from those of the Vedas. Particularly, the practices called Cinácáras or practices of cina, enjoined in some Tantras of this group, are in all probability of non-Vedic origin. Of course, the philosophy behind the practices of the non-Vedic Tantras, is not quite distinct from that of the pro-Vedic Tantras, the only remarkable difference between these two being this that in the non-Vedic Tantras greater concession has been given to the sensual pleasures and feelings of the common human beings,[3] while in the pro-Vedic Tantras greater emphasis has been laid on the restraint of the common human feelings.

The Vedic religion has two principal paths — (i) *Karmakánda* or the path of action which is meant for the preservation and smooth running of society and (ii) *jñána-kánda* or the path of knowledge which leads men to liberation. The former is the

path of *pravrtti* or *bhoga* i.e. enjoyment; the latter is the path of *nivrtti* or *tyága* i.e. renunciation. These two paths are thus contradictory to each other. The *karma-kanda* advocates the maintenance of society through actions and wordly enjoyments, while the *jnana-kanda* preaches the renouncement of all the worldly enjoyments for the attainment of liberation, the summum bonum of life. Here the problem is: if liberation is to be attained only through renunciation, will the persons performing actions and living household lives be deprived of liberation? The Tantra comes forward to solve the problem by affiliating *pravrtti* or enjoyment to *nivrtti* or renunciation. It says that *bhoga* or wordly enjoyment also can be directed towards liberation. The *Kulárnava-Tantra* says that in Tantra *bhoga* re-appears in the form of yoga.[4] That means, here *bhoga* is enjoyined not for *bhoga* itself, but for *yoga* or re-union with the Ultimate Reality. For, in Tantra, *bhoga* or enjoyment appears as *bhoga* only outwardly, while inwardly it is *tyaga* or renunciation. Hence the practices prescribed in the Tantra embrace both the elements of enjoyment and renunciation found in *karma-kánda* and *jñána-kanda*, respectively. And from a comparative study of the Tántric and the Vedic practices, it will be seen that most of the Tántric practices exist in some form or other or, at least, in the form of a seed in the Vedic practices relating either to *karma-kánda* or to *jñána-kánda*.

The Tántric practices may broadly be divided into three classes as follows: (1) Some practices are regarded as obligatory or extremely necessary for spiritual uplift and are accepted by people in general with reverence, being neither dreadly nor extremely secret, (2) Some practices are considered as obligatory or highly necessary for the attainment of an enlightened life but are generally looked upon as dreadful or extremely secret. (3) There are still other practices which have little relation or no relation with religion or spiritual uplift and are performed for the fulfilment of some wordly desire or for the gratification of some evil motive.

(1) The first kind of practices include *diksa* or initiation from some *guru* or preceptor, *japa* or muttering of *mantras* or holy words and sentences, *purascarana* or muttering of *mantras* in a great number along with some other performances, *homa* or sacrifice, *asana* or physical posture, *pránayamá* or breath-control, *dhyana* or meditation, *dharana* or concentration of the mind, *yantra-sádhaná* or practice on symbolical diagrams, and so on. The most important practice of this kind is that of *sat-cakra-bheda* or raising the *kundalini* power lying at the base of the spinal cord to the *brahma-randhra* or *sahasrara* lying at the tope of the same cord. It is held that there are six cakras or meditational centres called *muladhára, svadhisthana, manipura, anaháta, visuddhá* and *ajna* within the nerve called *susumná* running through the spinal cord. These six centres lie parallel to the evacuative organ, the generative organ, the nevael, the heart, the throat and the brow, respectively. The duty of a *sádhaka* is to raise the *kundalini-power* lying below *múládhára* to *brahma-randhra* or *sahasrára* through these six meditational centres.

(2) The principal practices of the second type are those performed with *pañca-ma-káras* or five things having 'm' as the initial letter in their names. These five *ma-káras* are: *madya* or wine, *mánsa* or meat, *matsya* or fish, *mudrá* or eatables and *maithuna* or sex-enjoyment. *Cakra-sadhana* or practice performed in an assembly of males and females with the five *makaras* in a secret place — preferably in a cemetery — at some dark night is also a practice of this type. The practice with meat necessarily brings with it the performance of *vali* or animal sacrifice including *nara-vali* or the sacrifice of human beings. Other practices of this type are: *svagatra-rudhira-mánsa-sádhaná* or the practice of offering blood and flesh out of one's own body, *cita-sádhaná* or practice with the help of the funeral pyre, *sava-sádhaná* or the practice of meditation by sitting on a dead body in a secret place — preferably in a cemetery — at dark night, *munda-sádhaná* or practice to be performed by sitting on three or five heads of men or of different animals including one of man, and so on.

(3) Practices of the third type consist mainly of the *sat-karmans* or six kinds of occult practices called *abhicáras*.

These are: sánti or practices for the cure of some disease or for warding off some evils, *vasikarama* or practices for enchanting or overpowering some person, *stambhana* or practices for barring the fruition of some event, *vidvesana* or practices for creating an inimical relation between persons, *ucatana* or practices for creating imbalance in some one's mind and *marana* or practices for killing some person.

Let us now see how far these practices can be traced to the Vedic literature.

1. Diksá or initiation from some guru or preceptor is an essential sacrament of the Vedic tradition. In the *Aitareya Brahmana* (Ch.1) and the *Taittiriya Àranyaka* (Ch.2) we find detailed descriptions of the rite of initiation or *diksaniyesti.* The *Chándogya Up.* says that it is only a man who acquires proper knowledge from an acarya or preceptor that can repell his ignorance about the self or Brahmans. *Japa* or muttering of *mantras* and *purascarana* or muttering of *mantras* in a great number are but improvements over *svadhyaya* or regular study of the Vedas. That *homas* were regular and obligatory performances of the Vedic people does not require any detail. The Vedic people had to perform the rite of *agnihotra* daily, in which they had to offer milk to the fire called *garhapatya.* Besides, there were *homas* of numerans types.

Practices like *ásana, pránáyáma, dhyána* or *nididhyásana,* dháraná etc. were quite familiar to the Upanisadic way of spiritual life. The *Upanisads* say that meditation should be performed by sitting and keeping the chest, neck and head straight.[6] In a number of places of the *Upanisads,* we find references to *prána* and *apána,* the knowledge of which is essential for *pránayáma* or breath-control. The *Chándogya Up.* (1.2) and the *Brhadáranyaka Up.* (1.3) have shown in detail the superiority of *prana* over all the sense-organs. The five kinds of *prána* or vital air are mentioned in the *Prasna Up.* (3.5). *Pránáyáma* is clearly referred to in the *Katha Up.* (2.2.3) and the *Svetasvatara Up.* (2.9).[17] *Dhyana* or meditation and *dharana* or contentration of the mind were the principal practices of the Upanisadic sages. The well-known passage of the

Brhadaranyaka Up., srotavyo mantavyo nididhyásitavyah (2.4.5), clearly ordains the practice of mediation. In the later Upanisads like the *Yogasikha,* the *Yoga-cudamani* etc. there are plenty references to *asana, pranayama, dhyoána, dháraná* etc.

Though the Tántric mono-syllabic *mantras* or sounds called *vijas* seem outwardly to be meaningless, much importance is attached to them. Taces of such mono-syllabic *mantras* are found in the Vedas. The use of '*phat*' is probably mentioned in the *RV* and is clearly found in the *Vájasaneyi-Samhitá* (7.3).[8] The *Taittiriya-Aranyaka* (4.27) mentions a distinct charm consisting of the sounds '*khat*', '*phat*' and '*kat*'.[9] The Tantric method of symbolising spiritual principles through some letters of the alphabet can clearly be traced to the *hinkáropásaná* and *aumkáro-pásaná* of the *Chándogya Up.* (1.1), and the *Àsvaláyana Srauta -sútra* (1.1).[10]

The practice of worshipping *yantras* or symbolical diagrams may be traced to the *AV* and the *Taittiriya Àranyaka.* The design of the sacrificial altar described in different *Bráhmanas, Àranyakas* and *Súlva-sútras* also might have contributed to the formation of the idea of the symbolical diagrams of the Tántric practices. Laksmidhara, while commenting on *Soundarya-lahari* (32), quotes some passages from the *Taittiriya-Bráhmana* and the *Taittiriya-Aranyaka* and explains them as referring to the Sri vidya of Tantra. Swami Visnutirtha also quotes some passages from the "Saubhagyakanda" of the *AV* to show that the idea of Srì vidyá alongwith that of symbolical diagrams is traceable in the *AV.*

The most important practice of tantra, Yoga, Vaisnavism, Advaita-Vedánta etc. is that of *sat-cakra-bheda.* In short, all other practices of these schools are meant for this *sat-cakra-bheda.* It is generally opined that this practice originated in the school of Tantra where from it was borrowed later by the other schools. But a study of the Upanisadic literature shows that the idea of the *cakras* or meditational centres and the nerve *susumna* within which the *cakras* are said to exist was already there in the *Upanisads.* The *Katha Up.* (2.1 12,2.3.17) and the *Svetasvatara Up.* (3.13) say that the Highest Purusa exists

in the lotus of the heart in the shape of the thumb. The *Chandogya Up.* (8.1.1) and the *Kaivalya Up.* (1.6) refer to the *hrtpundarika* or heart-lotus.[12] The *Katha Up.* (2.3.16) refers to a nerve originating from the heart and extending up to the tope of the head, which is noting but the nerve susumna. Further, the same *Up.* (2.2.1) describes the body as having eleven gates which certainly include — besides the nine well-known passages of two ears, two eyes etc. — *múládhára* and *brahma-randhra*, the passages at the base and at the top respectively, of the nerve *susumna*.[13] The *AV* describes the body as a city having eight *cakras* or circles and nine gates. Here 'eight *cakras*' probably include besides the six well-known *cakras* — *sahasrara* lying at the tope of the head and *lalan-cakra* lying between *ajna* and *sahasrara*.[14] Again, the *AV* states that the spinal cord contains thirty-six *aksaras* or letters.[15] This corresponds to the Tantric idea of placing the *aksaras* to the different *cakras* of the spinal cord. In the well-known simile of two birds resting on the same tree, the bird free from all sorrows represents Brahman staying in *brahma-randhra* or *sahasrara*, and the bird subjected to sorrows stands for the jiva lying at the base of the spinal cord.[16] The tree described as '*urdhva-mulovak-sakha*' (*Katha*,2.3.1) i.e. as having its roots above and the branches below, refers to the nerve *susumna*; for at the tope of the nerve exists Brahman and in its lower parts lie the principles of life. Further, the series of creation found in the Samkhya-Yoga system corresponds to the different *cakras*. The space between sahasrára and the ájñá *cakra* lying parallel to the brow accomodates the categories from *prakrti* to *ahamkara*, while the cakras of *Visuddha, anahata, manipura, svadhisthana* and *muladhara* lying at the throat, the heart, the navel, the generative organ and the evacuative organ, respectively, correspond to the categories of ether, air, fire, water and earth, respectively. The *Chandogya Up.* (5.16) describes the generative organ as a place of water.[17] The *Yoga-sútra* of Patañjali refers to the *nabhi-cakra* or navel centre, *hrdaya* or heart, *kanthakupa* or throat and *murdha-jyotis* or *brahma-randhra*.[18] The *Yoga-sástra* of Dattatreya discusses in clear terms the position of the nerve *susumná* and the

cakras lying within it.[19] The later *Upanisads* like the *Kaivalya*, the *Yoga-sikha*, the *Yoga-cúdámani* etc. deal in detail with the nerve *susumná* and the *cakras*. From all these, we can conclude with certainty that the idea of the nerve *susumná* and the *cakras* was there in the Vedic tradition.

2. Of the secret and dreadful practices of Tantra, the most common and remarkable practices are those performed with the five *ma-karas*. Of them, *mudrá* or the practice of offering cooked rice and vegetable etc. to the Mother and taking the same after wards is not at all an element of secrecy or censure. This practice of *mudrá* may be traced to the Vedic practice of offering purodasa, a kind of cake, to the gods and eating the remains of it.

In the Vedic soma-sacrifices, the sacrifices used to offer the juice of *soma*-creeper to the gods and take the same after the offering. This soma-juice was a kind of liquor, as it is clearly understood from the behaviours of the gods and the scarifiers after drinking it (RV 2.19.1) *Soma* was very much favourite to Indra who become intoxicated by drinking it, and, accordingly, he was very often called *somapa* or *soma*-drinker, The *Satapatha Bráhmana* (5.4.5.19) says that spirituous liquor was offered to Indra, Asvina and Sarasvati in the *Sautramani* sacrifice. *Soma* sacrifice, *soma*-juice was extricated three times a day-in the morning, in the noon and in the evening and was offered to gods. Particularly, in the *atirátra* type of *soma*-sacrifice. *Soma* was used in large quantity at night. Thus, the Tántric practice with wine was a very common element of the Vedic rites.

Animal-sacrifice or *pasu-yága* was also a very common performance of the Vedic people. In the Bráhmanic literature, there are detailed descriptions of the killing of animals in the animal-sacrifice. In this sacrifice, a spot was demarcated for killing animals, where a *yúpa* or wooden-frame for binding the animals was kept fixed. After chopping off the head of an animal there, the *vapá* or fat of the animal was taken out of its abdomen. It was then cleansed, cooked in an earthen jar and offered to the gods, after which it was taken by the

scarifiers. Animals commonly killed in animal-sacrifices were rams and goats. In horse-sacrifices, horses along with a number of wild and domestic animals were killed. *Vrsabhas* or bulls also were probably killed in some sacrifices. According to some, human beings were also killed in the sacrifices of *purusamedha* and *sarva-medha*, while according to others, human beings were simply offered alive and not killed.[20] In any case, there should be no doubt that the Tántric practice of human sacrifice or *nara-vali* has its root in the Vedic sacrifices of of purusa-medha and sarva-medha.

The role of sex-elements in connection with religious rites is also found in the Vedic literature. In the description of goddess Usas, there are elements which are prone to arouse sex-feelings. In the *Vájasaneyi-Samhitá* of the *Yajur-Veda*, there occurs a hymn (23.22-31) which seems to indicate that sexual union was employed for the promotion of agricultural products. The description of the horse-sacrifice occurring in the *Satapatha Bráhmana* (1.1,18,20,21) bears some sex elements. The description goes thus: The horse to be sacrificed is covered with a garment and slain. The queens go round it thrice from left to right and thrice from right to left. The chief queen goes near the horse. The queen and the horse are then covered with a garment and are given to lie together. In the meantime, the priest, the maidens and other queens indulge in vulgar and sexual talks. This part of the horse-sacrifice has thus a clear reference to sex and hence may be interpreted as having something to do with the fertility-cult.[21] Further, in the *Satapatha Brahmana* we come across numerous passage in which sexual union is identified with sacrifice (2,4.421; 2.51.11,5.13.19; 5.2.5.8;6.3.30;6.3.3.38;7.5.1.6). The *Altareya-Áranyaka* (2.1.1; 2.3.7) also refers to sex-element when it describes seed and woman-blood as Aditya and Agni, respectively.[22]

In a number of Upanisadic passages, woman is conceived as the sacrificial fire, her lower private portion as the sacrificial wood, the generative organ as the flame, and so on (Ch.Up.5.18.1-22,Br.Up.6.2.13). The *Brhadáranyaka* Up.(6.4.3) describes the

lower private part of woman as the sacrificial altar and the smaller parts of the same as representing different parts or materials of sacrifice. It is added that one who remembers this during copulation gets the result of the vajapeya-sacrifice. This means that sex-enjoyment should be regarded as a sacrifice and that it should be done without any attachment. In the "Vámadeva-upásaná" of the *Chandogya* Up.(2.13.1-2), it is said that the sign made by a man to a woman is him-kara (the sound 'him'), his lying with her is *udgitha* (the sound '*aum*') his facing towards her is *pratihara* (inspiration) and so on.[23] The *Taittiriya* Up. and the Taittiriya Áranyaka say that Prajapati in the form of immortal bliss exists in the generative organ.[24] The *Brhadáranyaka* Up. also says that all the elements of bliss culminate in the bliss of the generative organ.[25]

Thus, all the elements of the Tántric practices with the five *ma-káras* can be traced to the sacrificial rites of the Vedas and the philosophical discourses of the *Upanisads*.

The Tántric practice of the offering of blood and flesh by the sádhaka out of his own body might have developed from the idea of self-immolation found in sarva-yajña or from the Vedic idea that the yajamána or sacrificer is to be looked upon as the pasu or animal to be sacrificed. Though the Tántric practices of citá-sádhaná, sava-sádhaná and munda-sádhaná cannot be directly traced to the Vedic tradition, they seem to be later developments of some or the other Vedic rites.

The Tántric practices of *sat-karma* or six kinds of *abhicaras* or magical rites are explicitly dealt with in the Vedic literature as follows:

Sánti: the RV deals with spells for curing diseases (10.162) and prescribes antidotes for poison (1.191;7.50. In the AV, we find numerous spells for curing diseases imagined as demons (5.2.2). Further, in this *Veda* we find a number of hymns called *paustikani* by which one could gain happiness and avoid danger. There are also hymns called *sammanasya* by which peace and harmony of a family could be brought and unity between husband and wife could be restored. The use of

protective amulets is seen to be very popular at the time of the AV.

Vasikarana: The *Taittirliya-Samithirá* (2.3.1) prescribes sámgrahani mantras by which a person could be won over and prominent or powerful persons and unruly wives could be tamed. The *Taittiriya-Bráhmana* (2.3..10) says that Sita tried to win soma through sorcery. In the AV, there are numerous spells by which a husband or lover could attract his wife or beloved towards him (3.25.1-2). In the same way, spells are found which could be used by a lady to win over the heart of some man. We come across some across some formulas also by which one could appease the wrath of a great master or gain prominence in an assembly.

Stambhana: In the AV, we meet with wild charms by which a woman could be made barren or a man could be robbed of his generative power. In the *ábhicárika* hymns of the *AV*, there are also magic formulas to foil the magical acts of some enemy.

Vidvesana: In the RV, we find spells or practices for removing co-wives (10,145,159), as is clarified in the *Àpastamba-Grhyasútra* (10.5-8.9. In the AV also, there are spells which could be applied by a woman to oust her rivals.

Ucátana : In the AV we see spells coming under the class called stri-karmáni by which one could create love intrigues and disturbances in a married life, There also spells which are said to be capable of making some person insane. Again, we come across spells for inflaming the love of some woman (*Kausikasukta*, 35-28).

Márana: In the *Vájasaneyi-Samhita* (7.3), the *Kátyáyana Srayta-sútra* (9.4, 39) and the *Taittiriya-Àranyajka* (4.27), there are charms against demons. In the ábhicarika-hymns of the AV, we find charms by which enemies could by destroyed.

From the above, it is seen that almost all the elements of the Tántric practices can be traced to the Vedic literature, and, hence, they must be regarded as originating from the

Vedas. According to the traditional view also, the Tantras developed from the "Saubhágya-kánda" of the *AV*. The *kálikulárnava-Tantra* clearly focuses this tradition when it starts the discourse as; "Now Devi says in the *Àtharvana Samhita*". The *Rudra-Yámala* (Ch.17) also refers to Mahádevi as Atharava-Vedasakhini. The *Yántra-cintamani*, a Tantra-work by Dámodara, is eulogised as containing the essence of the *AV*. Further, the *Kulárnava-Tantra* describes the path of Tantra called Kulamárga as the essence of Vedas. In the view of Bháskaráya, the *Tántras* marks a continuation of the Upanisadic section of the *Vedas*.[27] Accordingly, the Tántric *Upanisads* are supposed to maintain a direct relation between the Vedas and the *Tantras*. All these views go in favour of the result of our foregoing study that the Tantric practices have got their origin in the Vedas.

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2. mathitvá jnána-manthena vedagama-mahárnavam. Sára-dharmo mayá devi kula-dharmah samuddhrtah — Kulárnava-Tantra, 2.10; tasmád vedátmakam sastram viddhi kaulátmakam priyc — ibid, 2.86.
3. vide Yoni-Tantra, Chs. 5 and 7; Nila-Tantra, Ch. 11; Kumári-Tantra, Ch. 6 and Gupta-sádhana-Tantra Ch. 4.
4. yoga-bhogátmakam kaulam — Kularnava-Tantra, 2.24; yogo bhogáyate — ibid, 2.25.
5. ácáryaván puruso veda — Chándogya Up., 6.14.2.
6. sukhásanasthah sucih sama-grivá-sirah-sarirah —Kaivalya Up, 1.5: trir-unnatam sthápya samam sariram hrdindriyani manasa sanni-vesya — Svetásvatara Up, 2.8.
7. páyúpsthe' panam — Prasna Up, 3.5; athaikayordhva udánam — ibid, 3.7; úrdhvam pránam unnayaty-apánam pratyagasyati — Katha Up, 2.23; pránán prapidyeha samyukta-cestah — Svetasvatara Up, 2.9.
8. phat pranáva tva vyánaya tvá — Vajasaneyi-Samhitá, 7.3.
9. khat-phad-jahi, chindhi bhindhi handhi kat — *Taittiriya*

Àranyaka, 7.27.

10. aum-ity-etad-aksaram-udgitham upásita — Chándogya Up, 1.1.1; see ibid, 1.12-13.

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12. angustha-mátrah pujruso madhya átmani tisthati — *Katha Up,* 2.1.12; angustha-matrah puruso ntaratmá sada janánám hrdaye sannivistah — *Svetasvatara Up,* 3.13; brahmapure daharam pundarikam — *Chandogya Up,* 8. 1.1; hrt-pundrikam virajam visuddham — *Kaivalya Up,* 1.6.

13. satam caiká ca hrdayasya nádyas tásám múrdhánam abhinihirtaká — *Katha Up,* 2.3.16; puram ekádasa dvaram — *ibid,* 2.2.1.

14. asta-cakrá nava-dvára — *Atharva-Veda,* 10.2.

15. brhatih kikasáh — *ibid,* 9. 12.

16. dva suparná sayujá sakháyá samánam vrksam parisasvajate. tayor anyah pippalam svadv-atty-anasnann-anyo abhicakasiti — *Mundaka Up,* 3. 1.1.

17. *vide Chandogya Up,* 5.16 and Sañkara's comt. on it.

18. nabhi-cakre kaya-vyuha-sthanam — *Yoga-sutram* 3.29; hrdaye citta-samvit — *ibid,* 3.34; kantha-kupe ksut-pipasanivrttih — *ibid,* 3.30; murdha-jyotisi siddha-darsanam — *ibid,* 3.32.

19. *vide Dattátreya Yoga-sástra* verses 107-118.

20. *vide* Cinva-Svami, *Yajña-tattva-prakása,* pp. 38-39, 108-122.

21. puruse he vá ayam adityo garbho bhavati yad-etad rajah — *Aitareya Aranyaka,* 2. 1. 1.

22. A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and the Upanisads,* p. 345.

23. upamantrayate sa hinkaro, jnapayate sa prastavah, striyásaha sete sa udgithah, prati strim saha sete sa pratiharah — *Chándogya Up,* 2. 13.1.

24. prajápatir amrtánanda ity-upasthe — *Taittiriya Up,* 3. 11. 3.

25. sarvesam anandanam upastha ekayanam — *Brhadaranyaka Up,* 2.4.11; ekaki na ramate sa dvitiyam aicchar — *ibid,* 1.4.3; see *ibid,* 6.4.3-4.

26. sarvabhyo va esa devatabhya atmanam alabhate....tad-devatabhyo yajamana atmanam niskrinite — *Aitareya Brahmana,* 6.3; avadhnan purusam pasum — *Atharva-Veda,* 19. 1.7. 10 and *Taittiriya Aranyaka,* 3. 12. 35.

27. tantránam upanisac-chesatvat — Bháskararáya's comt. on *Nitya-sodasikarnava,* 1.22.

Chapter-4

What is Siva Liñga ?

Chapter-4

The worship of Siva-linga placed on a round plate called arghya or *yonipata* is a common practice prevalent in the cult of Saivism. Practically, in this cult the worship of Siva-linga is much more popular than the worship of the image of Siva. It is said by the Saivites that the worship of Siva can not be complete without the worship of Siva-liñga. The *Siva-purána* declares that the worship of *linga* is higher than the worship of Siva's image.

As to the existence of the practice of Siva-linga worship in ancient India, there is no definite proof at our hand. Some faint marks of the worship of Siva's image are, of course, found in the Vedic literature. For example, the *Rg-Veda* refers to some *cáru citra* or beautiful image or art of Siva.[2] The *Yajur-veda* also seems to hint to the existence of the practice of the worship of Siva's image, when it speaks of the worship of *Tryambaka* marked with sweet scent.[3] But no significant hint to the existence of the worship of Siva-linga is to be found in the Vedic leterature.

Those who look upon linga-worship as a form of phallism as discussed below, hold that the term *'sisnadeva'* occurring in the *Rg-Veda*[4] means some barbarians following the practice of phallic worship. But this view can not be accepted on the ground that no reference to such a tradition is found in the Vedic interpretations of ancient India. Yáska in his *Nirukta* says that *'sisnadeva'* means one who is devoid of *brahmacarya* or sex-control. Durgácárya also explains the term in the same way. Sayana explains the term to mean people addicted to sensual pleasure.[5] Accordingly, the word *'sisnadeva'* cannot be said to having relation with phallic worship.

In the remains of Mohenjodaro, some times of short shaped stone or burnt clay have been found. A few round-shaped flat and plain things also have been discovered from these

remains. According to some thinkers, the former class of items are probably those of Siva-lingaand the latter class of items, those of *yonipatas* or *arghyas*. George Marshal, in particular, is keen to identify some objects made of steatire and terra cotta as phallic symbols.[6] But this is a mere conjecture having no definite proof whatsoever. This view can be refuted by the fact that even within a period of about two thousand years after the Mohenjodaro civilisation, no such a tradition of Siva-linga-worship could be found in India.

In the Mahábhárata, there are clear marks of the practice of Siva-linga-worship. In the 'Anusásana-parvan of the same, there is clear reference to Siva-linga. In the 'Sauptika-parvan' (Ch.17.21-3) also a reference to the Siva-linga is found.[7] In the 'Vana-parvan', Arjuna is seen to be worshipping Siva in the form of an alter which certainly stands for Siva-linga.[8] The worship of SivaOlinga was however not popular in ancient India. Patanjali refers to Sivam, but not to Siva-linga. In the coins of the Kushana dynasty, images of Siva and Uma are found, but there is no evidence of Siva-linga. It seems that Siva-linga became popular during the Gupta age i.e. around the 4th century A.D. The connection of Siva-linga with *yonipata* seems to be still later.

Now, the problem before us is; What is this Siva-linga? The popular idea about the nature of Siva-linga is that it is a symbol of the generative organ of Siva, the plate below, known as *arghya* or *yonipata*, representing the female organ of Gauri, the Mother-Goddess. This idea is coupled with the general belief that Siva is a god fulfilling the desires of men in their marital life. A great majority of scholars also opine, in conformity with the popular belief that Siva-linga is a symbol of Siva's generative organ. In support of this view, some scholars hold that different forms of phallic worship were prevalent among the primitive societies of countries like Egypt, Greek, Roman etc., and the worship of Siva-linga is simply a variety of that primitive tradition of phallism.[9] Some scholars, on the other hand, contradict this view, saying that Siva-linga is the symbol of Siva himself, and not of his generative

organ. We are here making an endeavour to solve this problem and find out the real nature of Sivalinga.

Before making an observation on the controversy, it is to be noted that in the *Puránas*, there is a number of episodes about Siva-linga, some of which describe Siva-linga as the manifestation of the generative organ of Siva, while some others describe it as a revelation of Siva himself in the form of *jyotrlinga* or brilliant form. Episodes describing Siva-linga as the generative organ of Siva are the following:

1. The *Siva-Purána* says that once Siva, desiring to test the power of penance of the sages, assumed a beautiful form and, in a naked position, tried to allture the wives of the sages, and the wives of the sages also became allured towards him. At that time, the sages saw him and cursed that his *linga* should fall down there at once.[10] *Siva-linga* fell to the ground at once, but it took the form of fire, began to move hither and thither and burn all things that came to its front. The *linga* gradually expanded and pervaded the whole world. All the gods, demons and men became afraid to see the linga and went to Brahmá for rescue. Brahmá advised them to meditate upon Uma, so that she takes the form of *yoni* and pacifies the *linga*.[11] The gods and the sages did accordingly, and the *linga* became stable resting on the *yoni* of *Umá*.

2. (a) The *Skanda-Purána* says that once Siva assumed a beautiful form and, in a naked position, went to the Dáruka forest sportingly to collect alms from the hermitages of the sages, and tried to arouse the feeling of lust in the minds of the wives of the *sages*. At this, the sages became angry and cursed that his/*linga* should fall to the ground at once. *Siva's linga* at once fell to the ground.[12]

(b) In the same Purána the episode is described in a somewhat different way. It is said that after the death of Sati, Siva's consort, in the sacrifice of Daksa, Siva became mad with the feeling of lust and began to move hither and thither. He, thus, reached the hermitage of the Bálakhilyas and disturbed the wives of the sages with the feeling of lust. At

this, he sages became angry and cursed that his linga should at once fall to the ground. Siva's *linga* at once fell to the ground,[13] but it began to frighten the whole world. In fear, the gods began to sing in praise of Siva. At this, Siva became pleased and told that if Brahma, the gods and the Brahmins worshipped the linga, the world would be saved Accordingly, Brahmá, the gods and the Brahmins worshipped the Siva-linga and the world was saved.

3. The *Vámana-Purána* says that after the death of Sati, Siva became mad with lust, travelled hither and thither and then entered the forest called Dáruvana where he disturbed the wives of the sages. At this, the sages cursed him as a result of which the *linga* of Siva fell to the ground. Immediately after this, Siva vanished and his *linga* expanded to such an extent that it touched both the lower region and the upper region.[14] At this, the world became afraid. Visnu and Brahma then approached the linga and, with a view to finding out its end, went to its lower and upper regions, respectively. But they returned in vain and began to sing in praise of Siva. Siva then appeared and Visnu and Brahmá requested him to take back his *linga*. Siva agreed to take back his *linga* provided the gods worshipped Siva-linga. Visnu agreed and Brahmá worshipped golden Siva-linga.

4. In an episode of the *Siva-Purána*, it is said that once Kali, the black-complexioned consort of Siva, was engaged in deep meditation with a view to becoming gauri or white-complexioned. At that time Siva became mad with the pangs of separation from Káli and, being beautifully dressed, entered a forest of the hermits in a naked position with his companions. Except Arundhati, all the wives of the hermits became disturbed with the feeling of lust to see him. Seeing the conditions of their wives, the hermits became angry and gave Siva a good beating. In a blood-stained condition, Siva reached the hermitage of Vasistha. Arundhati served him with great care. Siva blessed her and went out of the hermitage. The wives of the hermits followed Siva again, and the sages also went on beating him. Thus passed off twelve years. After that. Bhrgu

and other sages cursed Siva that his *linga* should fall to the ground. Siva's *linga* fell to the ground but, in a beautiful and brilliant form, it expanded all around and then entered deep into the earth. At this, the whole world became dark and the hearts of the sages also was enveloped with darkness, Arundhati then came to know the identity of Siva and cured his wounds by her power of merits. The sages also recognised Siva and started singing in his praise. Then a voice was heard from above which advised the sages to worship the Siva-linga, saying that the worship of the Siva-linga is greater than the worship of the image of Siva.[15]

5. The *Padma-Purana* says that once Sváyambhuva Manu performed a great sacrifice in the mountain of Mandara. The sages who attended the sacrifice asked the *Vada-knowing* Brahmins. 'Who is the greatest among the gods?' The question was put to the great sage Bhrgu who advised the sages to examine the characters of Brahma, Visnu and Siva for having the answer to the question. Bhrgu said that, of these three, the one who would be found to have a pure character of the quality of sattva would be regarded as the greatest. Then, the sages alongwith Bhrgu went to Kailasa to examine the character of Siva. They met Nandin at the gate and requested him to inform Siva of their presence. Nandin told them that, as Siva was then engaged in enjoyment with Umá, it was not possible for them to approach him at that time. The sages waited at the gate for a long time, but yet they did not get permission from Siva to meet him. At this, Bhrgu became very angry and cursed Siva, saying that as he disregarded the sages in his mood of lustive enjoyment with his consort, he should take the form of *yoni-linga* or the female and male organs combined.[16]

6. In the "Sauptika-parvan"[17] of the *Mahábhárata*, it is said that at the time of the cosmic creation, when Mahádeva was engaged in penance within water, Brahmá created another Prajápati and directed him to create all the beings. Accordingly, Prajápati created innumerable beings. After that Mahádeva came out of water and found that the act of creation was

already complete. At this, he considered his *linga* unuseful and, having torn it off, he went to the mountain of Mújavat. The *linga* of Siva was stuck to the earth.

Episodes describing Siva-linga as the symbol of the divine and brilliant form of Siva are the following:

1. The *Skanda-Purana* says that once there arose a quarrel between Brahma and Siva on the question of their superiority.

The quarrel ultimately resulted into a fight between the two, which continued for one thousand years. After that a *jyotir-linga* or brilliant *linga* appeared in between the two,[18] and a voice from the sky advised them to refrain from fighting. It was said that the jyotir-linga was the Siva *-linga*, and he who could reach the end of the linga would be treated as the greater between the two. Brahmá went upwards and Visnu downwards to see the end of the linga, but neither could succeed in his venture.

2. This story of the revelation of the *jyotirmaya* or brilliant *linga* is found in the *Brahmánda-Purána* also.[19] It is said that when Brahmá and Visnu were engaged in quarrel on the question of superiority, a fire appeared in the northern direction. The brilliance of the fire made all other lights insignificant. Seeing that surprising fire, Brahmá and Visnu ran towards it to know what it was. The fire gradually pervaded the sky and the earth, and Visnu found an indescribable *linga* within the fire. Brahmá and Visnu went upwards and down-wards, respectively, and tried for one hundred years to reach the end of the *linga*, but failed. After that Siva appeared before them.

3. The *Siva-Purána* also describes the revelation of the *jyotir-linga* at the time of the quarrel between Brahmá and Visnu. Here the *jyotir-linga* is described to be a fearful pillar of fire within which Mahádeva, the formless, remained.[20]

4. In another episode of the *Siva-Purána*, it is said that after his birth from the navel-lotus of Visnu lying in *yoga-nidrá* a state between sleep and wakefulness - Brahmá, desiring to know the secret of his birth, travelled through the stalk of the navel-lotus of Visnu for one hundred years, and

again travelled through the lower region of the stalk for another one hundred years, but he did not find the end of the stalk. After that, by the direction of a voice from the sky, Brahma practised penance for twelve years. After that Visnu appeared and identified himself as the creator of Brahmá. At this, Brahmá became angry, abused Visnu and started fighting with him. During their fight, a *jyotir-linga* appeared in their midst, which was extremely brilliant and indescribable, having neither beginning nor end and neither increase nor decrease. It was formless and was known to be the cause of the universe.[21] Then, by the proposal of Visnu, both Brahmá and Visnu tried to find out the source of the fiery substance. Brahmá went upwards and Visnu downwards, but finding no end to the *jyotir-linga*, they began to meditate upon it for one hundred years. Then ten handed and five-headed Mahadeva appeared before them. Brahmá and Visnu sang hymns in praise of Siva and Siva pleased by the songs advised them to make *Siva-linga* with clay and to worship and mediate upon it. The same episode is found in the same language in the *linga-Purána* also.

5. According to another episode found in the *Siva-purána*,[22] Brahmá and Visnu were once engaged in fighting to test who was superior between them. In this fight, Visnu applied the Máhesvara-weapon and Brahmá let loose the Pásupata-weapon, as a result of which the world was on the brink of destruction. Seeing this, Mahadeva appeared in between the two in the form of a pillar of fire, and the weapons of Visnu and Brahmá dissolved into that pillar of fire.

6. The *Kúrma-Purána* describes linga as inexpressible, brilliant, indestructible and as of the nature of bliss. It is said that when Brahma and Visnu were engaged in fighting to test their superiority upon each other, a *jyotir-linga* or pillar of fire appeared in between them. The *jyotir-linga* was without any beginning or end, without any increase of decrease, and was extremely brilliant.[23] This jyotir-linga pervaded the whole universe. Brahmá and Visnu went upwards and down-wards, respectively, to find out the end of the *linga*, but failed. Then, they started praying to Siva, and Siva appeared before them.

7. The *Káliká Purána* says that after destroying the Daksayajna or sacrifice performed by Daksa, Siva took the dead body of Sati, his consort, on his shoulder and wandered all around in extreme anguish. Finding this act of Siva to be dangerous to the world, Brahmá, Visnu and Sani entered the body of Sati, cut it into pieces and dropped them on the earth. And Siva remained in the form of *linga* in those place where the head of Sati fell, and took the form of *lauha-maya* Siva-linga or Siva-linga having iron as its material.[24]

From the above study, it is clear that both the said views about Sivalinga have their roots in the *Puranic tradition*. Now, the problem before us is: which of these two views can be regarded as genuine. On this problem, the following points may be considered for coming to a conclusion.

1. The term *'linga'* did not originally mean the generative organ. It meant the fine state of something. Vácaspati in his *Samkhya tattva-kaumudi* says that *'linga'* means that fine state of something into which the gross form of that thing is desolved.[25] The *Skanda-Purana* also explains the term in the same way. In the general usage of the term, 'linga' means some special mark which points to the existence of something else. It is used to denote the generative organ only in a secondary sense, and this sense developed only at a later time Hence, the term *'linga'* can not be taken to mean the generative organ, if the context does not require it.

2. In Vira-Saivism, the term 'linga' is used to denote any divine form. According to this school, there are six *linga-sthalas* or forms of Siva, namely, *maháling* a (the great), *prasada-linga* (the gracious), *cara-linga* (the dynamic) *siva-linga* (the auspicious), *guru-linga* (the preceptive) and *acara-linga* (the practical).[26] These *linga-sthalas* have not even the slightest relation with the generative organ. It is notable that the Saivites of this school are the most devoted followers of Siva-linga. They are called Lingáyets also, as they follow the practice of hanging a Siva-linga on the neck.[27] Even in such a system, Siva-linga does not mean the generative

organ.

3. The practice of attaching *yonipata* below the Sivalinga is not universal. There are numerous Siva-lingas which are not attached to *yonipata.*

4. Though the *linga-worship* is specially related to the Siva-cult, it is not monopolised by this cult. For there are references to the *linga-worship* of other gods like Visnu and Brahma. For example, the *Kálika-Purána* speaks of the *lingas* of Brahma and Visnu.[28]

5. There are numerous Siva-lingas with eyes, mouth, nose etc. and also some with four mouths.

On the strength of the above facts, some think that it is reasonable to look upon Siva-linga as a symbol or representation of Siva himself and not of his generative organ. In the view of Mahesvar Das and Haridas Bhattacharya, Siva-linga was never connected with the phallic worship; it simply stood for the indescribable Absolute.[29] Haridas Bhattacharya and Ramesh Chandra Majumdar hold that Siva-linga is a substitute of Siva, just as the *salagrama* stone is a substitute of Náráyana,[30] it is assumed by some thinkers that the idea of representing Siva by Siva-linga might have originated from the Upanisadic statements like 'Brahman is stable like a tree', Though without any foot or hand, it moves and receives: though without any eye, it sees; and though without any ear, it hears etc.,[31] which speak of the unchangeable nature of Brahman.

It is, however, an extreme view to hold that the worship of Siva-linga was not at all connected with phallism. The idea of phallism was there, but it was blended with the idea of Siva as the absolute cause. The point is that, Siva conjoined with Sakti, the Mother-Goddess, is regarded by the Saivites as the ultimate cause of the world. This idea compared with the worldly fact of procreation from the organic contact between male and female, lead to the idea of organic contact between Siva and the Mother-Goddess, for the explanation of the creation of the world. In reality, view, from the transcondental point of view, Siva and Sakti are formless; they assume divine

forms only for the satisfaction of the devotional sentiments of the spiritual aspirants. Hence, the idea of the generative organ of Siva and the Mother-Goddess does not suit to the transcendental nature of Siva and the Mother. Even in the state of divine froms, Siva and Sakti are not to be taken on a part with other beings enjoying organic pleasure. The forms of Siva and Sakti are divine and are completely free from sensual pleasure. This divine existence or sport of siva and Sakti or Gauri has its parallel only in the sport between Srikrishna and Radha or the *gopis*. In this divine existence, there is no difference between the body and its parts or organs for every part of the body is *cinmaya* or divine. Accordingly, it is foolishness to distinguish between the body of Siva and his organ. The so called difference between the whole and the part is made only for the satisfaction of the sentiment of divine love of the devotees. Again, it is not the organic relation between Siva and Sakti, but the total relation between them that is the cause of the universe. Hence, it is Siva in his totality that may be compared to the male generative organ and Sakti in her totality, to the female generative organ. Tt this kind his idea that degenerated into the naked sex-beheaviours of Siva depicted in the above mentioned Puranic episodes. This shameful and pitiable delineation of Siva, otherwise known as Yogirája or the king of the self-controlled yogins, most be attributed to the credit of some authors of low grade. And it is the myths fashioned by such authors of low grade that have influenced a class of thinkers or devotees to take the Siva-linga as the generative organ of Siva. What we men to say is this that Siva-linga primarily denotes the brilliant divine form of Siva, it is the pratika or symbol of the totality of Siva, may be is gained as the male generative organ, in view of the fact that the creation of the world proceeds from the contact between Siva, the Absolute, and Sakti, the conscious power of Siva. This very idea is found in the Kálika-Purána and the Brahma-Samhita which declare that Sambhu, Sankara or Mahesvara is of the form of linga.[32] To be more explicit, even when the conception of generative organ is applied, Sivalinga is to be taken to represent the totality of Siva, and not the

generative Organ of Siva. It may be added that, it is this idea of Siva-linga as the symbol of the totality of Siva that has relevance to religious practices or spiritual progress of the devotees. The concept of Siva-linga as a symbol of the generative organ of Siva has nothing to do with the religious practices or spiritual progress of the devotees. The concept of Siva-linga as a symbol of the generative organ of Siva has nothing to do with the religious practices nor with the spiritual progress of a devotee.

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Chapter-5

Tantric Practice with Makáras

Chapter-5

To the general people, Tantra and the Tántrikas or the followers of Tantra are objects of both dislike and fear. Some occult practices called *abhicáras,* which have little relations with religion, and also some religious pursued by the Tántrikas are responsible for this. Of the religious practices of Tántra, the *ma-kára-sádhanas* or practices with the *ma-káras,* in particular, have been subjected to serious criticisms.

These *makáras* are five in number, namely, madya or wine, *mansa* or meat, *matsya* or fish, *mudrá* or crooked rice and vegetable and *maithuna* or sex-relation.[1] These are called *ma-káras,* because all the words denoting these objects have *ma-kara* or the sound '*m*' in the beginning. And *ma-kára-sádhanás* are those religious practices that are pursued by the Tantrikas with the help of these *ma-kárás.* Of the five *mákáras, mudrá* is described by none as an object coming under *mudrá* are not at all harmful to our moral life and are used by all of us in our day-to-day life. But the other four *ma-káras* are seriously criticised by all the scriptures of Hinduism including Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, and also by the people in general as directly opposed to religion and ethics.

Of course, scriptures like the *Manu-smrti* and the like have prescribed fish and meat as food, but these prescriptions are meant for the people of low grade who have no idea about the higher and purer plane of spiritual life. This is clear from the fact that, while giving his final assessment, Manu has declared non-eating of fish and meat as the *uttama* or the highest form of practice, and has advised the spiritual aspirants to abandon the practice of eating fish and meat.[2] Likewise, drinking of wine has also been allowed to the people of lower rank, and sex-relation has been prescribed for the house-holders, though at the end, the abandonment of these habits has been eulogised as giving great fruits.[3] This means that these four *ma-káras* are treated as opposed to religious or spiritual life. Under these

circumstances, a question naturally arises in our mind as to why these things have been declared in Tantra as means for spiritual uplift.

In some authoritative scriptures, it is held that the terms '*madya*', '*mánsa*' etc. found in the Tántric prescriptions do not, in reality, mean wine, fish etc. with which we are acquainted. These terms are here said to be used in technical senses to denote different steps or stages in the path of spiritual progress and realisation. Thus, in the Tántric scriptures, we find the explanations of the *ma-káras* in different ways as follows: (1) The practice of drinking *madya* or wine means the practice of tasting the flow of nectar oozing from the *tálu* or *Brahmarandhra* situated at the top of the spinal cord. '*Mánsa*' means speech (*má* = tongue, *amsá* = speech) and, hence, the practice of eating *mánsa* means speech-control. '*Matsya*' means *svása*, the outgoing breath, and *prasvása*, the ignoring breath, or the two forms of air lying in the nerves called *Ganga* i.e. *idá* and *Yamuna* i.e. *pingalá*. Hence, the practice of eating *matsya* means *pránáyama* i.e. breath-control or aircontrol. The practice of eating *mudrá* means digesting the sentiments of desire, fear, hatred, vanity, shame etc., by boiling them by the fire of knowledge. '*Maithuna*' means union between Brahman and the individual self.[4] (2) '*Madya*' means bliss derived from the enjoyment of Brahman through the practice of *Yoga*. '*Mátsya*' means the dedication of all actions to Brahman. '*Matsya*' means feeling the joys and sorrows of all beings as one's own joys and sorrows. '*Mudrá*' mean giving up the company of evil persons. '*Maithauna*' means union of the self with Siva, the Highest.[5] (3) '*Madya*' means absorption in the meditation of Brahman and in the bliss arising from such meditation. 'Mánsa' means absorption in the meditation of Brahman through the destruction of merits (*punya*), demerits (*pápa*), anger etc. '*Matsya*' means sense-control and absorption in the meditation of the self. '*Mudrá*' means 'boiling' or destroying desire, greed, etc. '*Maithuna*' means absorption in Brahman.[6] (4) *Madya* giving rise to happiness and misery stands for *rakta* or blood. *Mánsa* energising the body and the mind represents *váyu* or air. *Matsya* increasing the power of fertility signifies water. *Mudrá*

or vegetable forming the foundation of all the living beings symbolises the earth. *Maithuna*, the root of multiplicity, represents *vyoman* or space. Hence the practice of the five *ma-káras* means divinisation of all these elements and dedication of the same of the Lord.[7] (5) '*Madya*' means tasting the flow of supreme nectar oozing from *bindu* (which lies in the lotus of *sahasrára* at the top of the spinal cord and functions as the root of all manifestations) as a result of the union between the *kundalini*-power and *bindu*. '*Mánsa*' means destroying merits (punya) and demerits (*papa*) — symbolised by the animal to be sacrificed — and offering the heart — represented by *mánsa* — to the Lord. '*Matsya*' means controlling the senses and bringing them to the contact of the self. '*Maithuna*' means bringing the individual self in contact with the Supreme Self.[8]

Here the question is : if the said words are really used in their technical senses to symbolise spiritual practices of different grades, as presented above, why have the Tántrikas chosen these words which in their general usage carry the meanings of undesirable things and thereby arouse doubts and disrespect in the minds of people? To this, some say that these words have been used to attract the ordinary people or people of low grade who are addicted to such things. But this interpretation cannot be accepted on the following grounds : (1) First, it is not possible to attract the ordinary people simply by uttering a few words denoting things of allurement. To attract the ordinary people, those things must actually be offered to them for their enjoyment. (2) Secondly, in the Tántric scriptures, detailed descriptions of the *makáras* are found as follows : *Uttama madya* or *madya* of high quality can be produced from molases, sesamum and honey. *Mánsa* or meat can be acquired from the three types of animals living in water, land and air. Amongst *matsyas* or fishes, *sála*, *bodála* and rohita are the best ones, *Sáli*-rice — white like the moon-beams — when cooked or baked with *ghee* becomes suitable to be used as *mudra*.[9] Flowers are also worthy of being used as *mudrá*. In thecase of the practice of Maithuna Sádhaka's own wife is declared to be the best associate.[10] All these descriptions have clear references to the corresponding material things we are

acquiainted with. It is neither possible nor, desirable to give acquainted with. It is neither possible nor desirable to give symbolic or spiritual interpretations to all these terms. (3) Thirdly, the five *ma-káras* in this director popular senses are seen to be used not only by the ordinary *sádhakas* but also by *sádhakas* of high rate, in the pursuit of spiritual life. Great *sádhakas* like Bámaksepa and others used to take wine, meat etc. in their spiritual practices. Sri P. K. Chattopadhayay in his *Tantrábhilásir Sadhusanga* informs us how great Tántrikas having super-sensuous experiences also used to practice with the five *makaras*. An event described in this work will suffice the position : In the dark night of a new-moon day, a number of Tántrikas, each having his female associate with him, assembled in a lonely cemetery, sat in a circular way, consumed sufficient meat and wine along with their female associates and practised for the whole night. In this assembly, the *cakresvara* or the head of the circle and the *bhairavi*, his female associate, embraced each other in a naked position and attained *samádhi*, loosing their external senses.[11] This description shows that even the *sádhakas* of high rate practise with the five *makáras in their popular* senses.

Now, we are confronted with two problems : (1) First, if wine, meat etc. are really meant for spiritual practices, why have the Tántrikas given the aforesaid symbolic or spiritual interpretations of the *ma-káras*? (2) Secondly, why did the great followers of Tantra like Ramakrishna and others not practice with the *ma-karas*?

In solving these problems, the Tántrikas say that *sádhakas* or spiritual aspirants are divided into three types, according to three types of *bhávas* or mental attitude. The three types of *bhávas* are: (a) *pasubháva* or *tamasika-bháva* — the animalistic attitude or the attitude of the quality of *tamas,* (b) *virabháva* or the *rajasika-bháva* — the heroic attitude or the attitude of the quality of *rajas,* and (c) *divyabháva* or *sáttvika-bhava* — the divine attitude or the attitude of the quality of *sattva.*[12] Though these three *bhávas* are sometimes described as three steps in the path of spiritual progress, it is more reasonable

to regard them as three different ways of spiritual practice pursued by the *sadhakas* of three different attitudes. Of these three types of *sádhakas*, a *sádhaka* of the *pasubhava* is not entitled to practise with the *ma-káras* in their popular sense, since practices with the *ma-karas* may bring downfall in his spiritual life. Hence, some *anukalpas* or substitutes for the *ma-káras* are prescribed for this class of *sadhakas* as follows : The substitutes for *matsya* are cocoanut-water, milk, honey, the juice of ginger mixed with molasses so on. The substitutes for *mansa* are salt, ginger, sesamum, garlic and so on. The substitutes for *matsya* are red radish (*mulaka*), brinjal, salt, ginger, etc. The substitutes for *mudra* are paddy, rice etc. The substitutes for *maithuna* is offering of flower.[13] For the *sadhakas* of *divyabhava* also, the five *makaras* are not prescribed, since the *sadhaka* of this class, being always absorbed in divine thoughts, consider it superfluous to practise with these external elements. The *sadhakas* of this class are advised to; take only the symbolic or spiritual meanings of the *ma-karas* as mentioned above. The five *ma-karas* in their populer senses are prescribed — for the *sadhakas* of *virabhava* only. According to some, the external *ma-karas* are prescribed for the *sadhakas* of *divyabhava* also.[14] But it is more reasonable to attach the practice with the external *ma-karas* to the *sadhakas* of *virabhava* only, as it is the *sadhakas* of *virabhava* only that try to attain spiritual enlightenment through confrontation with the natural tendencies of the mind-boby. But for whomsoever the *ma-karas* might be prescribed, a *sadhaka* is not allowed to practice with them according to his sweet will. A *sadhaka* may practise with the *makaras* only when the preceptor, considering the capability of the *sadhaka*, allows him to do so.

In some Tantras, the five *ma-káras* have been described as obligatory for all kinds of *sadhakas*. The *Mahánirvána-Tantra* says that without the practice of *ma-káras*, a *sadhaka* cannot except to make progress in his spiritual journey, as he is liable to be confronted with obstacles at every step of his journey. The *Mátrkábheda-Tantra* says that without drinking *madya* or wine, no person can acquire the highest knowledge and that by drinking *madya* even the worst sinner can acquire real

knowledge and attain liberation. A person, it is said, attains *suratva* or godliness at the very moment of drinking *sura* or wine. Likewise, the Kularnava-Tantra and some other Tantras also say that the practice with the *ma-karas* is essential for spiritual uplift.[15] In all these cases, however, the *ma-karas* are to be accepted in their symbolic or spiritual sense, since the practice with the spiritual *ma-karas* is obligatory for all. It is in the case of the *sadhakas* of *virabhava* only that practice with the *ma-karas* in their direct or popular sense has been regarded as necessary. In reality in the case of the *sadhakas* of *virabhava* also, practice with the external *ma-káras* is not obligatory. The *sadhakas* of this class are simply allowed, and not compelled, to practise with the *ma-karas*. This is known from the fact that there are numerous great *sadhakas* who did not practise with the external *ma-karas*, and that a great *sadhaka* like Ramakrishna described this way of spiritual practice as 'a path full of rubbish.'[15(a)] It cannot, however, be denied that practice with the external *ma-káras* — be it obligatory or optional — has been regarded in Tantra as a means for spiritual uplift.

Now, as said above, the non-Tantric thinkers have always decried the *ma-káras* as great evils, on the ground that they bring downfall in our ethical and spiritual life. Hence, the Tantric prescription of these *ma-káras* as means for spiritual uplift naturally evokes these questions: First, why have these anti-spiritual things been considered in Tantra as means for spiritual uplift? Secondly, is it really possible to make progress in spiritual life with the help of these *ma-karas*?

In solving the first question, it will have to be noted that Tantra has never described the enjoyment of the *ma-káras* as such to be the means for spiritual progress. Tantra has described the *ma-karas* simply as sub-servient to the spiritual progress of a *sadhaka* who, having his aim fixed on spiritual enlightenment, undertakes the relevant practices with the help of these *ma-káras*. A person whose purpose is simply to eat fish and meat, to drink wine, and to enjoy sexual pleasure can never be expected to make progress in the spiritual path. If

the enjoyment of these *ma-karas* as such be regarded as means for spiritual progress or for the attainment of liberation, then most of the people would be entitled to liberation without any endeavour. Tantra says that with the exception of a person eating matsya in its symbolic or spiritual sense, all fish-eaters are to be regarded as fishermen committing violence against animals. Again, it is said that a person drinking wine simply for enjoyment is a great sinner, and that unbridled enjoyment of the *ma-káras* is not different from the enjoyment by the lower animals.[16] The *ma-káras* are thus regarded as helping a *sádhaka* attain liberation or enlightenment, only when they are made use of according to scriptural injunctions and with proper self-control.

But the question still remains as to how these *ma-karas*, which are diametrically opposed to spirituality, can help a *sadhaka* in his spiritual progress. In reply to this, we have to say that *sadhana* or spiritual endeavour is of two kinds, namely, *nivrtti-márga* or the path of renunciation and *pravrttimarga* or the path of enjoyment.[17] According to the first path, a *sádhaka* is required to fight directly against those mental and physical tendencies that are opposed to spiritual progress. Here the aspirant is to maintain rigorous self control through *abhyasa* or the practice and *vairagya* or detachment and to destroy the tendencies of desire, lust, greed etc. to the root. And for this purpose, he is to give up the enjoyment of all those things that are liable to arouse these mental tendencies. In the path of *pravrtti*, on the other hand, a *sádhaka* is not to destroy the mental tendencies natural to human beings; nor is he required to give up those things of enjoyment that are liable to arouse these tendencies. It is through *bhoga* or enjoyment, declare the *sastras* of this path, that a *sadhaka* can attain *yoga* — enlightenment or liberation. But *bhoga* as such cannot lead a *sadhaka* to enlightenment or liberation. It is *bhoga* through the purification or divinisation of the natural human tendencies that can lead a *sadhaka* to spiritual enlightenment. This purification or divinisation is possible, when the natural human tendencies are directed towards the Lord or the Mother. That means, when

the *sádhaka* enjoys anything, he is to think and realise that the object of his enjoyment is but a manifestation of the Lord or the Mother. Accordingly, a *sádhaka* is here allowed to enjoy all those things for which he has a natural attachment. What the *sádhaka* is required to practise is that he should think and realise the bliss derived from the enjoyment of those things to be the bliss of Brahman or the Mother. A *sádhaka* by a regular pursuance of this practice, can transport his mind to the divine land lying beyond the land of material enjoyment. It is therefore said in Tantra that a *sádhaka* can rise to the spiritual plane with the help of those things that are liable to bring downfall in the life of man.[18] The significance here is that, a *sádhaka* is to enjoy divine bliss in the very enjoyment of the worldly things, and thus try to detach his mind from the objects of worldly enjoyment. When a *sadhaka* is successful in this practice, the whole world reappears to him as divine. This clearly shows that *pravrtti-márga* is simply a step towards *nivrtti-márga*. And it is this *pravrtti-márga* is simply a step towards *nivrtti-márga*. And it is this *pravrtti-márga* that is prescribed in Tantra. Tantra therefore says that in it *pravrtti* is transformed into *nivrtti*, or rather, *bhoga* reappears as *yoga*.[19] This path is meant particularly for those who lead a domestic life, and also for those who are not capable of practising rigorous self-control.

It is now clear that the five *ma-káras* are prescribed in Tantra from the viewpoint of *pravrtti-márga*. Here the *sádhaka* is required to realise, at the time of enjoying the *ma-káras*, that the enjoyment he gets is but a manifestation of the bliss of Brahman. In other words, he should enjoy Brahmánanda through the enjoyment of the worldly things. A point to be noted here is that all the enjoyments of the world originate, in reality, from Brahmánanda. The ordinary people cannot realise this because of ignorance and the resulting impurity of the mind, which impose limitations of their enjoyment of bliss. A *sádhaka* who, through proper practices directs his mind towards the Supreme, can destroy this ignorance and the resulting impurity of the mind. As a result, the limitations imposed by ignorance and the impurity of the mind vanish and the unlimited divine

bliss reveals itself. This is what is called 'divinisation.' When a *sádhaka* is successful in divinising his natural human tendencies, he finds no difference between good and bad or between truth and falsity. To him, the so-called evil deed is revealed as a good deed; the untrue, as true; the undrinkable as drinkable; the uneatable, as eatable; and the unenjoyable as enjoyable.[20] The practice with the *ma-karas*, thus, shows the path of divinisation and teaches us how to infinitise our finite enjoyment.

In reply to the second question, we may say, from an analysis of the natural human tendencies, that it is certainly possible to rise to the plane of pure and divine bliss through worldly enjoyment. If we can enjoy worldly things as Brahman, our enjoyment becomes pure and deep, as a result of which our natural tendencies rise to a divine plane. The enjoyment of the beauty of a flower becomes purer and deeper, when that beauty is enjoyed and realised as the beauty of Brahman. Such an enjoyment destroys the bounds imposed on us by the mind-body, and unites us with the unbounded bliss of Brahman. In the same way, the bliss derived from the enjoyment of the *ma-karas* rises to an infinite and divine plane, when it is realised as identical with the bliss of Brahman. The truth of this position is attested by the life-histories of numerous *sádhakas*.

Of the five *ma-káras*, the fifth one called *maithuna* or sex-relation has naturally become the object of worst criticism. To clarify the position, *káma* or lust is regarded as the greatest obstacle to spiritula progress, and it is the sex-relation or relation between the male and female that enkindles the fire of lust.[21] Hence, the question naturally comes: how can sex-relation be regarded as a path for spiritual progress? To this, our reply is that, in Tantra, a *sadhaka* is advised not to enjoy his female associate through the feeling of lust, but to look upon and enjoy her as a human representation of the Divine Mother — to transform the woman into Mother. Likewise, a *sadhika* or female aspirant is also advised to look upon and enjoy her male associate as a human representation of Siva.

In reality, *káma* or lust and *preman* or love are but two

aspects of the same psychological attitude. If we can turn the direction of *káma* towards the Lord or the Mother, it reveals itself as *preman*. Great sages of ages have shown in their practical lives that *káma* can be transformed into *preman* and that, accordingly, all the conditions evoking *káma* can be transformed into conditions evoking *preman*. We have already referred to the event of an assembly of the Tantrikas where the head of the circle and his female associate embraced each other in a naked position and were absorbed in *samadhi*. Krsnadasa Kaviraja in his *Caitanya-caritamrta* informs us that Ramananda Raya, a Vaisnava-saint and devotee of Sri Caitanya, used to practise with some *devadasis* — girls in the services of the deities in a temple — as his associates. Ramananda Raya used to bathe these girls in his own hands, ornaments them and apply perfume to their bodies. And while doing so, he used to be absorbed in the plane of divine realisation. We cannot doubt the sanctity of the behaviour of Raya and the height of his realisation, because of the fact that a great saint and staunch follower of self-control like Sri Caitanya paid his highest tributes to Raya, saying that he was matchless in his self-control, and that like a stone he ever remained unmoved by the felling of lust. Great devotees like Candidasa, Vilvamangala and Jayadeva also used to practise with their female associates. In the life of Sri Ramakrishna also, we find that one day, by the direction of his lady-preceptor Bhairavi Brahmani, he had to sit on the lap of a naked, beautiful and full-grown girl; but even in this condition he remained unmoved by lust and behaved like a child. The key to the attainment of such a mental balance lies in the divinisation or motherisation of woman. It will not be out of place to mention here that Srikrsna's Rasa-sport with the *gopis* was played in such a divine plane. And through the practice of *maithuna*, Tantra teaches us this great secret of divinisation or motherisation of woman.

We may thus conclude that all the practices with the *ma-káras* teach us to divine the objects of our attachment or enjoyment. When a *sádhaka* is successful in this divinisation, he sees that the material *ma-káras* are transformed into the spiritual *ma-karas*. In other words, in this plane, he enjoys the

ma-karas in their symbolic or spiritual senses as representing different planes of spiritual realisation. He now derives the greatest pleasure from the enjoyment of the nectar of the bliss Brahman [*madya*]; the whole of his existence [*mudra*] including the *prana-vayu* or vital air [*matsya*] is realised by him as identical with the existence of the Supreme; all the actions relating to his mind-body are brought under his control [*mánsa*]; and his self becomes fully absorbed in Brahman [*maithuna*].

Of course, it is very risky to practise with the *ma-karas*, particularly, with *maithuna*, as in this path there is very chance of downfall at every step. The *Kularnava-Tantra* therefore says that these practices are more dangerous than walking through the edge of a sword, or clasping the neck of a tiger or catching hold of snake. That is why the practices with the *ma-karas* are generally kept secret within the circle of a selected few, and great religious teachers concerned with the mass do never propagate them.

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2. tasmán matsyán vivarjayet — *Manu-Samhita*, 5. 15; nivarteta sarva-mansasya bhaksanát — *ibid*, 5. 48.
3. na mánsa-bhaksane doso na madye na ca maithune, pravrttir esa bhuanam nivrttis tu maháphatá — *ibid*, 5. 56.
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Chapter-6

Gradations of Approaching the Divine

Chapter-6

VI

Gradations of Approach

The natural state of communion is the highest; meditation and concentration are the middle; japa and chants of praise lower; ritual and outer worship are the lowest.

(9.34)

THERE are several modes of approach and communion with the Divine, each appropriate to the inner development and condition of mind of the seeker. Those that are the least developed, the most extrovert, need the external material support of ritual, ceremonies, etc. for keeping themselves turned to the Divine; those who are a little more developed do not feel the need of physical modes of worship and they resort to *japa* and chants of praise. Those who are still further up on the ladder of evolution discard all physical and semi-physical means and take to concentration and meditation upon the object of their quest. The highest state, however, is arrived at when communion with the Divine is constant and natural : one does not need any special practice to live in the consciousness of oneness with the Divine.

GURU (I)

There is no truth greater than the Guru.

(3.113)

TO the seeker the Guru embodies the truth to be realised; the Guru it is who communicates the truth to the disciple, gives him the power to assimilate it and become one with it. Thus does the Guru represent to the disciple to Ideal to be attained and the means whereby to seek it. The Guru is all because he can give all. To the disciple there is nothing beyond the Guru.

GURU (II)

All holy actions are rooted in the Guru.

(12.14)

ALL ritual in *upásaná*, inner discipline, depends for its life-dynamism on the spiritual energy transmitted by the Guru in the initiation. The power which flows into the disciple when he is taught the ritualistic action by a competent Guru emerges the act and makes it alive. Without it ritual is mechanical and does not yield its intended fruit.

GURU (III)

Guru is the father, Guru is the mother, Guru is God Maheshwara Himself.

(12.49)

THE Guru is the mother who carries the seeker in the womb of his consciousness before he gives him birth into the life of the Spirit.

The Guru is the father who tends to the growth and welfare of the initiate in the difficult Path.

The Guru embodies the Lord for it is through the person of the Guru that He manifests Himself to the disciple and reaches to him His saving Grace.

GURU (IV)

Form his transcendent station, the Lord in the form of the Guru frees one from animal bonds.

(12.26)

WHAT is achieved in the disciple as a result of the force of the Guru does not depend upon the human capacities of the Guru. For it is not his personal attaintments or lack of them that decides the issue. When one surrenders oneself to the Guru, it is to the Divine Lord that one opens itself through him. And the Power of the Lord is supreme; it is not handicapped by the limitations of the human instrument; it achieves what the Lord wills.

The Divine acts through the human Guru. The Guru functions as the channel, rendering the Divine accessible to the aspirant who cannot enter into direct relation with the Divine on his own.

GURU (V)

The sight of the Guru of the Kula Path is difficult to obtain in all the worlds; only by the happy ripening of previous merits is that obtained, not otherwise.

(9.91)

THE Guru, who shows the Truth, opens the way to realise it and imparts the strength wherewith to tread it, is not secured by human effort. He appears on the scene when one is ready to receive his message, when one is developed enough, across the lives, to be able to get into the spirit of the Teaching of the Guru, to live in tune with his liberated and liberating consciousness. When the seeker is thus prepared by his past and present evolution for the decisive step, he is either taken by circumstances to where the Guru is or the Guru himself comes to him.

GURU (VI)

There is no Mantra higher than the paduka; *no God higher than the Guru; no initiation higher than the* sakta, *and no merit higher than the Kula worship.*

(12.12)

To remember and dwell in one's consciousness upon the feet of the Guru symbolised by the *páduká* is more effective than the repetitio of any Mantra; it is a direct communion with a living Power.

The Guru is a representative of the supreme God, an embodiment of God to the disciple. He is accessible in every way. One can have personal relation with him in a manner that is not normally possible with Deities who are nonphysical in character.

Initiation, *diksá*, is of several kinds, each requires its own instrumentation. But the *saka diksa,* direct transmission of spiritual dynamism, needs nothing by way of channel or ritual to be effective. It is spontaneous and effective instantaneously.

Men seek to acquire merit by various means — ethical, religious and others — but the best way is to accustom the consciousness to dwell upon God by a concentrated pouring of oneself upon Him — in the chosen form, — at all levels of the being, mental, emotional, physical. Only so is one effectively lifted up Godwards — and that a is the meaning of real *puṇya.*

GURU (VII)

At the root of dhyána *is the form of the Guru; at the root of* puja *is the feet of the Guru; at the root of the* mantra *is the word of the Guru; and at the root of all liberation is the grace of the Guru.*

(12.13)

THE Guru it is whom lies the key to the success of all sadhanas in the life spiritual.

To begin *dhyána*, meditation, the first step is to visualise the form of the Guru, focus all the mental faculties on it, connect oneself to the inspiration that flows from it and lead the mind in the desired direction.

Before any *pújá,* worship, is begun, one offers mental worship first to the feet of the Guru for it is the spiritual power that flows from the feet that effects the conjunction between the worshipper and the Deity invoked.

No mantra is truly effective unless it has been received through the mouth of the Guru. In communication the mantra, the Guru transmits his *tapas-shakti* to the disciple through the word and that power works in the form of the mantra.

Liberation — the culmination of all spiritual sadhana — cannot be effected by one's own strength. It is only a Power greater than one's own, from outside the range of the triple Ignorance of this creation, that can cut the final knot of bondage. And that power comes through the Grace of the Guru.

GURU (VIII)

When the superb Teacher gives to his disciple then does the disciple get liberated; there is no further birth for him.

(12.19)

THE real Guru, high of soul and full compassion, does not merely initiate the disciple and receive his adoration. He holds himself responsible for the spiritual welfare of the disciple, takes upon himself the burden of his destiny, lays open to him his own resources of the spirit and mind. The Guru not only takes the disciple into its own being but also gives himself — with all his attaintments — to him. And it is the spiritual power of the Guru which passes into the being of the disciple and goes on to effect his liberation. He freed from the cycle of birth and death.

GURU AND GOD

Even when God Shiva is wroth, the Guru is the saviour; but when the Guru himself is annoyed, there is none to save.

(12.49)

IN a manner of speaking, the displeasure of the gods can be faced if the Grace of the Guru is there. For he is capable of averting the consequences of the displeasure either by his own spiritual power or by interceding with the gods. But if the Guru himself were to be displeased, then woe to the disciple! There is a deeper relation between the Guru and the disciple that normally admits of no interference.

GURU AND PARENTS

The parents are indeed to be deliberately adored because they are the cause of your birth; but the one to be worshipped especially is the Guru who shows what is dharma and what is not.

(12.48)

THE parents have a claim upon the gratitude and fealty of man because it is they who given him birth and reared him up. But the Guru is to be adored much more. For while the parents give him only physical birth, and bring him to materila life, the Guru gives a greater birth, birth into the Truth of God, opens his eyes to the right path, and launches him into a life that assures a glorious future in this world and the next.

GURU'S WORD

A single word of the Guru gives liberation; all sciences are a fraud.

(1.107)

THE various branches of learning cultivate and develop the mind in the ways of the intellect. But they do not by themselves gives liberation to man from the rounds of birth and death. At best they may bring home to him the real nature of his bondage, how his faculties are limited on every side by ignorance and division and even indicate the ways and means by which he can free himself. But the actual working out of that process of liberation cannot be done from this learning alone. It has to come from another source that is the Word of the Guru. This word is potent because it is not the speech of the common kind. It represents the expressive power of the spiritual consciousness of the Guru who has realised the Truth in himself. It is an outer means of communication of his inner state of Knowledge and *tapasyá* to the seeker. This word implants in the being of the disciple the dynamics of the realised Truth which is self-effectuating and which really builds the way, the *sádhaná* in him.

HERE

If one does not remedy the ills of hades here itself, what indeed can the afflicted hope for there where medicine is not?

(1.24)

THE malady that afflicts life on earth is to be cured while one is on earth itself. For the means to do so are provided to man when he is living. He is given the faculties of understanding, vision, will. If he fails to utilise this opportunity to cure himself of the disease of ignorance, egoism and division by proper effort during his lifetime, it is idle to expect things to be better after death. In the worlds to which man departs, there are no possibilities of sudden change and cure; that can be done only on earth which is the appointed field for evolution and progress. Great is the predition, says the Upanishad, if one fails to make it *here.* What is there can only be a continuation of what is here.

The problem is projected here and it must be faced and solved on its own ground.

HOLY COMPANY

Company of the holy is the remedy and the cure.

(1.56)

ASSOCIATION has an influence larger than is admitted. Especially for those who seek to achieve the higher ends of life, the company of the holy is invaluable. It is not so much their words or teaching but their very presence that makes a great difference. They live normally in a higher state of consciousness, attuned to the Truth of their Ideal, and constantly emanate vibrations characteristics of their state of realisation. These vibrations of higher consciousness create a special atmosphere of purity, peace and spiritual power around them, and whoever breathes it comes under its uplifting influence. One is exposed to the higher charge all the time and without any special effort changes are seen to be initiated in his person; the good elements get nourishment and increase while the opposite ones are depressed and dwindle away. A natural change comes over as with logs of fuel, in varying conditions, getting dry and ready in the warmth of a fire.

HOLY MEN (I)

I do not dwell in Kailas nor in Meru nor in the Mandara mountains; I am there where the Knowers of the Kula-Turth are.

(9.94)

THE Divine is not to be sought in the geographical locations celebrated in mythology. Whatever the symbolic significance of these traditions, the Divine is found more easily through those who have realised the Truth of the Divine in themselves. They have perceived the Reality, attained identity with it in the depths of their being and emanate the direct vibrations of the Divinity with whom they are in union. To come under their influence, to establish contact with them and to be with them mentally, vitally and physically is a sure means to realise the Divine Reality. Not pilgrimages to distant places but company of the holy is the way.

HOLY MEN (II)

Where the Knower of the Kula-Truth lives, that place is santified.

(9.97)

HE who has realised the Truth of the Divine does not live within a closed circle of existence, cut off from all. On the contrary he radiates incessantly from every pore of his being the high Consciousness that he breathes, and all in his environs absorbs its vibrations. Everything undergoes a change. Those that are ready catch the flame of aspiration and progress with rapidity; those that are not yet ripe — the still wet logs of fuel — are warmed up and made ready, known or unknown to themselves. All quickens in pace. The stamp of his realisation is impressed on all orders of creation around him.

HUMAN BIRTH (I)

The Knowledge of the Reality cannot be obtained without human birth.

(1.14)

THE Tantra speaks of the innumerable births that the soul has to pass through before it can arrive at maturity, a condition suitable for taking and supporting the human embodiment. And this human organism alone is endowed with the means of understanding the nature of life, its goal and the way to arrive at it, in a word, of coming into possession of the Knowledge of the truth of oneself and of others, of the Truth which gives meaning to all existence. Man alone, of all creatures in life, has the intelligence, the awakened soul to acquire and wield the Knowledge of the Truth in manifestation. Human birth, thus, is a rare opportunity presented by Nature after aeons of preparation through a successive series of inferior births and it behoaves man to put it to the best use open to him and not fritter it away in lesser pursuits.

HUMAN BIRTH (II)

Human birth, ladder to liberation, is difficult to obtain. Who is more to be pitied than he who gets this birth and yet does not save himself?

(1.16)

THE human birth is a culmination of a long, long series of preparatory births in the journey of the soul; it marks a definite stage where full awakening from the sleep of Inconscience is effected and the possibility of breaking through the bondage of Ignorance by a purposive growth into the freedom of self-knowledge is placed before man. He is given all the means of will, feeling, thought by which he can outgrow the tutelage of Nature and build himself in the image of God, his creater. No other type of being in creation is given such an opportunity and the wherewithal to fulfill the great object of life, — Freedom, Light, Immortality of Consciousness. Woe unto the man who denies himself the high destiny that is spread before him !

IMAGES

Milk is formed through the entire body of the cow but it pours out only through the teats of the udder; even so the Divinity pervading everywhere radiates through the Images and the like.

(6.75)

THE Divine is indeed spread everywhere in its formless infinity. But on that account it is not all beyond perception, beyond the reach of the human faculties. The Divine reveals itself in finite Form as well. In fact all forms are ultimately the self-figurations of the Divine Being. Of these forms again, there are some which are special concentrations of the Divinity; they reveal the ensouling Divine more readily than others. Such are the Images, Idols, etc., that have come to be worshipped as significant forms and living symbols of the Divine.

IMMEDIATE

Do today what is for tomorrow, do in the forenoon what is for the afternoon; Death does not wait to see if things are done or not done.

(1.42)

IF time is fleeting, the wise man forestalls it by anticipation. He is not taken by surprise, he does not wait for the turn of things. Not only does he not postpone anything, but he always believes in completing in advance. He seizes time by the forelock and achieves in the immediate. For no one knows what the next moment has in store, what new unforeseen possibilities may not come into the situation. Besides, he knows that Death, the ender of things, is always on the prowl. And this unwelcome guest has no consideration for the convenience of man.

INNER AND OUTER (I)

There is no Mantra higher than meditation; no god higher than the Self; no worship is higher than inner pursuit; there is no fruit greater than contentment.

(9.37)

ALL practice of Mantra leads to communion with the Deity and when this communion is perfect, the consciousness dwells solely on the Deity — there is *dhyána*. Thus *dhyána* is a culmination of Mantra.

There are several gods and goddesses in the universe. They are so many emanations put out from the Supreme Creator for purposes of the manifestation. But He Himself is present in the creation, in each form in creation, as its Self. The self is the Divine itself while the gods are Powers and Personalities of Him.

The aim of all worship is to establish relation with the Deity and invoke its Presence. Outer ritual is only a support, a help. The real process is inner; the mind and the heart aspire and pour themselves in adoration and pursuit gradually leading the consciousness to oneness with the Adored.

There is fruit and fruit but the one feature common to most is fulfillment of desires. But that does not bring lasting happiness. A desire satisfied breeds another and there is no respite. There is real happiness and peace only when one is able to touch the repose of the soul within. This contentment depends upon nothing external and is the fruit of fruits.

INNER AND OUTER (II)

The one without ritual is the higher worship, silence is the higher japa, thought-free state is the higher meditation, and disrelessness the higher fruit.

(9.38)

WORSHIP is of two kinds : the one with outer ritual to support the communion is the *báhya pújá,* external worship; the outer and higher is the purely inner worship, a flow of adoration of the Deity with or without mental enaction of the ritual.

Japa is of two kinds : audible, with the word or words physically repeated by mouth; the other and higher is the mental, inaudible, silent, in which one dwells upon the Mantra repeating it inwardly without moving the lips.

Meditation is two kinds : the one which pursues a line of thought organised around the object chosen; the other and higher is the state without thought activity, the mind is silent without any occupying idea-movement.

And what is the fruit of all these practices? There are many kinds that are sought, e.g., material advancement, health of body and mind, affluence in heavenlier states beyond, liberation from birth and death. None of these, says the text, is worth the pursuit. The objective is to be free from desire, even the desire for liberation. Personal desire totally eliminated and displayed by the Divine Will is the ideal condition.

INNER TRUTH

To perdition he goes who regards the Guru as human, the Mantra as mere letters and the Images as stone.

(12.45)

THE true votary of the Tantra is not misled by appearances. He knows that the truth of things is within them, not on their surfaces. The Guru to him is not merely a human being like all others, albeit better endowed than the others, and he does not deal with him on that basis. The Guru represents and embodies to him the very Divine that he aspires to realise and he adores him in the light of his experience.

Similarly the Mantra he practises is not simply a string of letters set together with some rhyme or no rhyme. It is the sound-body of the Deity he prays to. It is not just a means or technique to take him to his goal. It is both the way and the goal in one.

Neither is the Image he worships merely a material figure. It is the physical Form in which the Deity is present. The Image or idol is the nodus for the meeting of the human consciousness that seeks and adores and the Divine Consciousness that manifests in response to the aspiration.

INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE (I)

Not knowing the Truth within himself, the deluded one gets lost in treatises.

(1.96)

MEN study and pore over books without number in order to know the Reality. But the Truth of things is not to be found in the pages of any books; it cannot be got simply by reading. It is to be seen and experienced. And the best place to experience it is within oneself. For there one has a direct perception, an intimate feeling which is unmistakable. The Divine is in the heart of things and renders himself most accessible at this core. To withdraw the consciousness from its pre-occupations in a hundred directions outside and centre it within oneself is the surest way to become aware of the Truth stationed within and to realise it.

INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE (II)

The head carries the flowers but it is the nose that gets the fragrance.

(1.95)

THE mere fact of learning and scholarship does not by itself give the power of wisdom unless one equips oneself and enters into the heart of that Knowledge. Only he who aspires for the liberative action of the Truth-Knowledge without losing himself in the intellectual formulations of it, gest its full benefit. Otherwise it remains a barren mental acquisition.

JAPA (I)

Japa is of three kinds. Japa done aloud is the lowest; Japa done in low tones is the middle; Japa done mentally is the best.

(15.54)

WHEN the Japa is done aloud (in the hearing of others) there is a tendency for the repetition to get mechanical. The sound predominates over the sense and much of the benefit is lost.

When it is done in low tones (with the movement of lips but outside the hearing of others) there is less distraction of sound. But still the effort of repetition of the words affects the concentration of the consciousness.

Such a concentration is fully possible when the Japa proceeds without verbal repetition (without any movement of lips). One dwells upon the meaning and the consciousness participates uninterruptedly in the affirmation and re-affirmation of the invocation. The letters or words are repeated very subtly within the being as supports to this flow of consciousness to the Deity.

JAPA (II)

If the repetition is too clipped, it causes disease, if too extended, it causes decay of tapas; when letters are stuck to each other, the Mantra does not fructify.

(15.55)

WHEN the japa is done one much be careful to see that the letters are pronounced with full regard to their form and individuality. No letters shall be suppressed or only partly pronounced; to give them only partial expression results in suppression of health. So also if in pronunciation the letters are unduly extended, it results in wastage of spiritual energy. Care should be taken to utter each letter distinctly so that each sound-vibration has its full course. Only so is Japa fruitful.

JAPA (III)

How can there be fulfillments if learning is acquired for the sake of debate, Japa done for the sake of another, gifts given for the sake of fame !

(15.102)

JAPA in sadhana is meant to enter into the consciousness of the Deity and become one with it. It is only the Japa that is done with this sole objective that is spiritually fulfilling. One learns to forget oneself more and more completely and, at the best, becomes the Deity itself. But if the Japa is undertaken for the sake of another, in order to work for the spiritual welfare of somebody else, it cannot be equally successful. For it is a matter is cultivating one's consciousness and leading it to contact and live in the greater consciousness of the Deity. It is for each person to make the effort and work out the process in himself. In this filed there can be no Japa by proxy.

JAPA (IV)

If the mind be in one place, Shiva in another, Shakti in another and life-breath still in another place, even a crore of Japa is useless.

(15.10)

FOR Japa to be fruitful it is indispensable that all the consciousness is concentrated and poured into it. Distractions and disorganised states of mind and feeling are an impediment. The mind must be gathered round the object of the Japa; the active consciousness (Shakti) must coverage on it all its currents; the passive being (Shiva) must be fully turned to the effort; and the life-breath must be geared to the repetition, for only so can the mind with all its faculties be easily quieted and focussed on the Japa.

JAPA AND DHYANA

When tired by Japa, take to Dhyana; tired to Dhyana; take again Japa. Of him who does both Japa and Dhyana, the Mantra achieves most.

(15.13)

A JUDICIOUS combination of Japa and Dhyana (Meditation) makes the sadhana less strenuous and more fruitful. When the mind shows signs of exhaustion due to long concentration on the repetition of the Mantra, it should be relaxed into meditation on the meaning and significance of the Mantra. The mind must be allowed to follow the unrolling of the Idea in the Mantra; this release of the thought-energies gives rest to the nerves and the being soon gets restored to normalcy. But if the mind is allowed to stay too long in this state of release, thoughts beging to wander and a tiredness of aimless movement sets in. It is then time to draw back all the faculties and focus them in the concentration on Japa. Thus both Japa and Dhyana are the two wheels upon which the *upásaná* moves to its destination.

JAPA AND STOTRA

Stotra, laudation, remembered mentally, the Mantra repeated verbally, are both useless like water in a broken vessel.

(15.56)

STOTRA, hymn of praise, is intended to be clearly articulated in words, expressed in its full sound-values and thus affirmed in the physical universe. The physical vibrations so released create an atmosphere, form a magnetic field as it were, and the Presence of the Deity that is lauded is successfully invoked on the spot.

The Mantra is to be dwelt upon in one's consciousness so that the Deity ensouling the Mantra gradually yields itself to the consciousness that is concentrated upon it. Mere verbal repetition remains only on the surface without affecting the inner domains of the being where the contact is to take place.

JIVA AND SHIVA

Jiva is Shiva; Shiva is Jiva; the Jiva pure is Shiva. When the bonds it is Jiva; freed from bonds it is Sadashiva.

(9.42)

THE soul associated with Nature, involved in its movements, is Jiva. In itself it is a portion, *amsa*, of the Divine. The Divine projects itself into the manifestation and this projection is the soul. When the soul is involved in the activities of life-nature it gets covered but its essential character is not affected. The moment it frees itself from the trappings forged in the process of the evolution in which it is cast, its innate character as a self-formulation of the Divine becomes patent.

JUST USE

Do not cut off even a blade of grass uselessly.

(5.46)

CREATION has a meaning and a purpose. Everything in the world has a significance; each thing — big or small — has its place in the total scheme. And to destroy anything in life regardless of the use for which it is intended is a wanton interference with the order of Cosmic Nature. This is not to say that nothing should be utilised. Everything is to be used for the purpose for which it is put forth by Mother-Nature, but not missed or wasted. As an awakened being, man has a special responsibility in this regard. One must learn to understand the intention in Nature, put oneself in tune with it and act in consonance with its will. That is the sign and the way of progress.

KARMA

Of what is done here the fruit is obtained elsewhere; of the tree whose roots are watered the fruits show on the branches.

(1.53)

EVERY action has its reaction — now or latter. It is in vain to hope to escape the consequences of one's doings in life here by going away elsewhere.

Whatever be the worlds to which one goes, the impulsions generated during the bodily life on earth follow man in his subtler bodies and insist on working themselves out. This may be effected partly in the period between death and re-embodiment and partly in subsequent births. The laws of Karma are, as a rule, ineluctable.

KAULA (I)

Away from misery, contended, devoid of qualities, free from jealousy, given to the Knowledge of the Doctrine, peaceful, the Kaula is always devoted to the Divine.

(9.84)

THE true Kaula — participant of the Kaula Dharma in the Tantra tradition harmonising the Truth of the Divine Being with the manifestation of the Divine Consciousness-Force — is to be distinguished not from external marks of appearance, ritual etc., but be the grade of the consciousness he has attained. He is one who is not lost in the miseries of the petty world of desires, disappointments and afflictions common to most. He is content with what is given to him by the Divine, finds his source of happiness with in hinself. He is not subject to the currents of likes and dislikes, good and evil, that sweep the mind off its balance. He does not burn himself with envy at the good fortune of others. He knows and lives in the Truth of the Divine, its Oneness, its overpowering Bliss. Nothing disturbs him; he is ever at peace, with himself and with the world. All his attention, all his energies flow towards the Divine, the supreme object of his adoration.

KAULA (II)

Without insolence, anger, show, desire and ego, truthful in speech, not enslaved to the senses, the master of the Kaula path is steady, not fickle.

(9.85)

BUT on that account, because of his high status, the Kaula is not proud, not haughty; he does not show off his powers or his knowledge to impress upon the less fortunate and gain a following. He is rooted in the divine centre within, not in the ego; he is not swayed by the impulses of nature, but is governed by the impulsions of the soul, the Truth within and he expresses in speech and action only what is consistent with that verity. He is firmly set in his pursuit of the Ideal and nothing can distract him.

SELF-REVEALING

Not by thinking but by itself alone is the Reality revealed.

(9.10)

THE Divine cannot be thought out. No amount of reasoning, thought deliberation can bring one face to face with the Reality of the Divine. Normally such mental activity only weaves a thought-web around the person. At the most, mental deliberation can process the mind, free it from its dross of materiality and vital colouring and prepare it for a higher growth. But it cannot seize the Divine even in its highest flight. The Divine is beyond. It reveals itself by its own choice and if the being is ready it can receive and imbibe the revelation. Thinking can be an aid but never the means to realise the Divine.

SHIVA-SHAKTI

The world is made of Shiva and Shakti.

(2.83)

THE universe is not a transient product of an illusive Power. It is a creation of a divine Puissance, Shakti, that not only puts it out into birth but builds it into a progressive manifestation of the Divine. She is there in the creation, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, as the Consciousness that informs and guides, as the Force that executes. But this Consciousness-Force, *cit-sakti,* is not alone. The Power is of one who wields it, the *Śákti* belongs to the *Sakta;* the Consciousness is of the Being, the Shiva, the Supreme Existent. It is emanated by and based upon Shiva; it brings out into manifestation what is contained in the illimitable Being of Shiva. In fact, the Shakti is none other than Shiva himself, Shiva *as* Shakti. Wherever Shakti is, there is Shiva too — whether in this world or any other. The Truth is One, revealing itself in its double aspect when turned to manifestation, and all that is manifest is constituted of this double truth of existence.

SINS OF THE DISCIPLE

The blemish of the minister touches the king; the blemish of the wife, the husband; and the sins of the disciple, without doubt, are visited upon the teacher.

(11.109)

When the Guru accepts one as disciple, he takes him into himself, makes him part of his own being and, in the process, takes his destiny upon himself. He shares his life with the disciple. There is an intermingling of the two consciousness till they become one. Naturally all that the disciple does — his thoughts, his words, his actions — has its own reactions in the being of the Guru and his Karam affects the Guru.

This is how the collective sins of the disciples, even devotees, come to leave a mark on the body of the Guru and even inflict physical damage upon it.

SUPREME TRUTH

Some seek the truth non-dual, others the truth dual. But they do not know my Truth which exceeds both.

(1.10)

PHILOSOPHERS dispute endlessly about the nature of the reality. Some hold that the Reality is one which does not permit any other; all else that seems to be is only an appearance, there cannot be anything else other than the sole, absolute, One. There are others who challenge this position and assert that there are always two truths — God and Nature, Spirit and Matter — and all is an interaction, a play of the Two. And so the disputations go on, each proclaiming his own view as the sole truth. The real truth of the matter, however, is that the Reality is above all mind-made distinctions. It is an omnipresent Reality which permits many possible experiences of it corresponding to the viewpoints from which it is perceived; it is the supreme Truth in which all experiences and the statements based upon them find their reconciliation. It is none of them solely but contains all of them in its integrality and exceeds them in its transcendence of all formulations.

TANTRA SADHANA (I)

From the múládhára go up to the brahmarandhra again and again; bliss issues out of his meeting of the Kundalini Shakti and the Moon of Full Consciousness. What flows from this lotus in the supreme Ether is the wine, the real wine to be lasted by man; what is drunk otherwise, is only liquor.

(5.107.8)

HERE is the sadhana of the Tantra and its ecstatic fulfillment in a nutshell. Awaken the concentrated dynamism of Power laying coiled up at the base of the spine in the body and lead it upwards in the system by appropriate means of Dhyana, Japa etc. and take it to the summit of the consciousness of supreconscience. When the two meet, the Power rising from below — the Kundalini — and the super-consciousness awaiting above — the Sahasrara — there is a flow of pure bliss. This is the real ecstasy, the yield of the mystic wine that is celebrated in the Tantra, and not the intoxication caused by the physical substance called wine which can be quaffed by any body without having to go through the elaborate and strenuous processes of the sadhana. Material wine is only an outer symbol in ritual of this inner flowing

TANTRA SADHANA (II)

Knowing yoga, cut asunder, with the sword of knowledge, the animal of duality — merit and demerit, and merge the consciousness in the Supreme. That is the true eating of meat.

(5.109)

THE animal to be sacrificed is not the four-legged quadruped that is the victim of common superstition, but the notion of good and bad, the obsession of duality that dogs the footsteps of man. This constant preoccupation with what is good and what is bad, what stores up merit and what accumulates demerit creates an unhealthy self-occupation that stands in the way of true enlargement and freedom in consciousness. Besides good and bad are very relative terms; what is good at one time, at one stage of development, becomes not good at another, what is bad now may turn out to be good later on. To eliminate this involvement in the net of *papa* and *punya* and find one's level in a consciousness that transcends both is the real way.

TANTRA SADHANA (III)

Bring the host of the sense under control by the mind and yoke them to the self. That is the true eating of fish; all else is simply to hurt the creatures.

(5.110)

THE senses are ever on the move, dragging the mind with them into the world of their objects. Man is always prone to this distraction of the sense and consequently fails to make the best of the opportunity and the time given to him. Instead of being his own master, able to direct and utilise the circumstances around him for his proper advancement, he is a slave of the senses, helplessly drifting wherever they lead. Bring these senses under thy controls, calls the scripture, let thy mind assert its rightful mastery over *prána* in whose current the senses are running. Once the *pránic* energy is controlled, all the sense-motions are automatically absorbed and the way is open to place the sense under the direction of the soul.

This is the true 'eating', the just utilisation of the senses and the objects for the feeding of the soul-experience for growth, not the indulging of the senses for their own satisfaction.

TANTRA SADHANA (IV)

The Woman to be waited Waited is the Shakti that is dormant in the animal man but awake in the votary of the Path.

The rush of bliss that ensues upon the meeting of the Pair, the Supreme Shakti and the Self above, is the real Congress; all else is mere copulation.

(5.111-12)

THERE is a divine Power latent in man waiting to be awakened into action. All the powers that are normally active and make life possible are only derivations, diminutions, secondary formulations of this Mother-Power that is dormant within. This puissance, the Shakti, is to be awakened, aroused into an upward movement towards the Self, the Pure Consciousness situated at the highest centre of the being of man. And when this union between the Shakti darting from its seat below in the lotus of the Muladhara and the Lord waiting above in the lotus of infinite petals, the Sahasrara, is effected in the consciousness of the practitioner there is an ebullition of intense Ananda.

That is the true Congress, the real bliss that is aimed at, not the physical interchange at the animal level.

UPASANA

Without upásaná the Presence does not fructify.

(6.79)

THE Divine is indeed present everywhere, especially in the human body. But that by itself does not make any difference to man unless he takes steps to realise it in his consciousness. Self-awareness, self-purification, adoration and evocation of the indwelling Divine are the main steps for awakening this Presence in his consciousness and making it a dynamic power in life. Such an inner discipline is indispensable to prepare and raise the human system to the level of that purity and intensity in seeking which alone can move the Divine to reveal and manifest itself in the person of the seeker. Otherwise the potentiality remains untapped and dormant.

UPASANA GRADATIONS

Laudation is worth a billion of worships; japa, a billion of laudation; meditation, a billion of japas; and absorption is worth a billion of meditations.

(9.36)

THERE is a gradation in the discipline, *sadhana* that leads to the Divine. Worship, with external means to support the dedication, is the first with which the communion starts. The next is less physical : it is the repetition and dwelling upon the Name or the Word of invocation of the Deity. Higher than that is the mental way of meditation on the form and truth of the Deity. Highest of all is the state of oneness that is the culmination of all successful meditation : one is absorbed into the object of pursuit — the condition of samadhi. There is thus a steady progression in this discipline : physical, semi-physical, mental, spiritual. The character of the means keeps with the nature of the developing consciousness.

VEDA

There is no science greater than the Veda.

(3.113)

THE Veda is the revealed knowledge. It is cherished as the Word which has issued from the Supreme along with the words that constitute the universe. It holds all the knowledge of the truths of Man, Nature and God, the way to harmonies them in oneself, effect the junction of Nature and God in oneself and fulfil the cosmic purpose in the manifestation. It contains the key to the problems of life in the institution of Sacrifice which is an outer symbol of the inner process of consecration and self-surrender by man to the Divinity (in appropriate forms) calling forth the birth of the gods of divine Knowledge, Power, Bliss and Harmony in his hallowed being.

VEDA AND TANTRA

Know the truth of the Veda to be the Doctrine of the Kaula.

(2.85)

THE Tantra is not alien to the Veda. The truth that ensouls the Tantra is essentially the substance of the Veda. The truth of a Divine Reality pervading all forms in existence, all states of consciousness and power in creation, the possibility of man awaking to this true nature of life, and himself developing into a live instrument of the Divine, participating in the cosmic Play of the Supreme — all these basic truths of the Veda enter into the structure of the Tantric system. The Tantra represents a continuation, an enlarged application suited to the developing mind of humanity, of the Vedic tradition.

VERBAL KNOWLEDGE

Verbal knowledge is not adequate to destroy the delusions of the worldly rounds. By mere talk of the lamp the darkness does not recede.

1.97)

THE Ignorance that holds man in slavery to inferior Nature cannot be dispelled by a reading of books or instructions by mouth. Words remain mere words and are ineffective. At best they give a mental understanding of the problem but no more. The solution has to come from elsewhere. It is only by *living* the knowledge, by building it as a live force for change in the consciousness, that the liberation can be effected. It is not enough to know and say that a lamp can remove darkness, it is necessary to fetch it and keep it alight on the scene.

WINE

If by the mere drinking of wine one were to attain perfection, all drunkard-creatures would be perfect.

(2.117)

IT is a common notion that in the Tantra wine-drinking is a means of spiritual perfection. If that were really so, says the text, all the low types of men that are addicted to drink would have reached the supreme state. Note the word *pamarah,* low creatures, used to describe those that take to the intoxicating drink. One who aims high can never resort to this type of drink which weakens and ultimately breaks the will which is the fulcrum of all determination and effort of man. It is a delusion to think that the sense of abandonment that comes over the senses on taking alcohol can be a means or a foretaste of the real freedom of the soul. Actually it is a precursor of the disintegration of the centralising power of will.

WORSHIP (I)

Worship with the instruction of the Guru.

(6.5)

TO worship is to commune with the Deity. To take and follow a set of procedure of rituals by oneself is not the way to do it. One must first receive the initiation, the authority to hold communion with the Guru. For the Guru is one who has realised in himself, in whatever measure, the reality of the Deity and can put others in relation to that Deity by means of his tapas-power. When he initiates, he implants this connecting power in the being of the disciple and the outer ritual is only a physical support to the repeated affirmation and building up of this relation. Without this authorisation and charge from the Guru, mere ritualistic worship is ineffective.

WORSHIP (II)

Worship the Sri Chakra by uniting the Mantra.

(6.9)

TO worship by mechanically repeating the prescribed Mantras is no true worship. The Mantra is the sound-body of the Deity. Each Deity has its Mantra. To reach the Deity the most natural way is to approach through the Mantra that is its sound-form. And that can be done not by simply uttering the letters that constitute the Mantra, but by joining, *yoga,* one's consciousness to the Idea, the Truth that is ensouled in the Mantra. By thinking upon the Idea in the Mantra, by dwelling upon it in the consciousness, and constantly affirming it in oneself while repeating the Mantra, one imbibes the vibrations of the Deity and moves closer and closer to it. This growing communion leading to an eventual union is the object of worship.

WORSHIP (III)

Set aside the faded petals of Ignorance and worship with the consciousness of 'He and I'.

(9.42)

WHILE worshipping the Divine do not offer to him the state flowers of thy desires, passions, ignorant movements. Throw them behind thee and realise that thou art another, not a creature of Ignorance. Know it in thy heart that thou art none other than He, the Divine, affirm this truth in thy consciousness and in this feeling of identity offer thy worship. So with thou grew into the likeness of thy ideal.

WORSHIP (IV)

Arouse the soul-force to its full potency and satisfy the Deities in the body.

(6.96)

THE body of man is conceived to be an miniature universe in itself. The various cosmic Deities occupy appropriate stations in the various limbs of the body. They are to be awakened and activised to participate in the worship. And the means to do it is to arouse the innate power of the soul which is for the most part inactive and behind the veil. The Shakti lying dormant is to be aroused by concentration and evocation with the aid of the Mantra and directed upwards where She meets the Lord seated in the *sahasrara* and the shower of Bliss ensues. The Deities presiding over the several limbs of the body share in this celestial downpour, become contented and join the whole movement of worship.

WORSHIP (V)

Worship with exclusive concentration.

(6.71)

WORSHIP is not a mechanical duty to be somehow completed. The invocation of the Divinity, its reception, adoration, self-surrender and finally, the termination of the meeting, are parts of a soul-process of growth into godhood and they call for all the attention and concentration of the mind that the practitioner is capable of. If the hands participate in the ritual without the proper consciousness in them, if the mouth merely parrots the formulas without the mind and the heart dwelling upon the sense in them if one is only bodily present on the scene of worship while the mind wanders elsewhere, then the purpose of worship is not served. Not only the mind but all the faculties of the being must learn to converge on the object of worship.

WORSHIP (VI)

If, fickle-minded, you call one Deity and worship another, you receive the curses of both.

(6.91)

BEFORE one undertakes worship and invokes a Deity, one must be firm in one's faith in that Deity. If, in the absence of such faith, one changes the object of the Call in the course of the *upásana*, prefers another Deity losing faith in the one already invoked, then one offends both. The first Deity is called but left unattended; the second is offered worship that has been already dedicated in spirit and tasted in part by another. It is disrespect to both.

YANTRA

As the body is to the júva, as oil is to the lamp, so is yantra the established seat of all the Deities.

(6.87)

THE Deity needs a physical nodus to function in the physical world. And that need is provided by the Yantra which is a diagrammatic form corresponding to the configuration of the forces that accompany the manifestation of the Deity on its own plane. When this figure — revealed to the vision of the Seer in his *tapasya* — is drawn and concentrated upon, it recreates, as it were, the very conditions in which the Deity became manifest originally and the Deity is moved to manifest in the Yantra.

Thus the Yantra is more than a symbol. It is the body of the Deity.

YANTRA AND MANTRA

The Yantra is ensouled by the Mantra, and the Deity is in the form of the Mantra.

(6.85)

WORSHIP of the Yantra is the same as worship of the Deity. For each Yantra is the form-pattern of a particular Deity. It represents diagrammatically the configuration of the lines of manifestation of the Deity. The soul of the Yantra — what gives life to it — is the Mantra that is used to consecrate and energies it. And this Mantra again, is the sound-pattern of the Deity. Each Deity has its characteristic sound-vibrations and they constitute its sound body which is revealed to the audition of the Seer in the form of the Mantra.

YOGA

The union of the jiva and the Self is Yoga.

(9.30)

THE being of man is one in its essence with the Divine Self which bases and supports all life. But it is not aware of this divine origin and character because it is involved in the operations of Nature in Ignorance. By awakening to this truth of himself and by the adoption of a psychological and spiritual discipline, it is possible for man to disengage himself from his many-sided involvement in the life of Ignorance, increase the awareness of his true nature, gradually grow into the consciousness of the Self within and eventually realise his identity with it. This union — and the means to it — is Yoga.

YOGIN (I)

The yogin should regularly perform sandhya without mantra and water, austerity without puja and fire-sacrificial, worship without ceremonies.

(9.39)

THE yogin does not need to undergo all the ritualistic exercise that the ordinary man does to gain communion with the Divine. But he continues the modes of communion though he dispenses with the active supports which are no longer necessary in his stage of development.

The yogin dwells in his consciousness on the Divine at peak periods. He undergoes continuous self-disciplining of the mind, life and body. His being flows in adoration towards the Divine, even in submission and self-consecration. Meditation, concentration of will, adoration of the Divine, are integral parts of his effort.

Chapter-7

GLOSSARY

Chapter-7

The vast Tantra literature contains a large number of technical terms and words which are not commonly used. Here we have noted only such words as are often necessary for the study of Tantras.

For the convenience of those who are interested only in the scientific elements in Tantra, we have given a separate list containing exclusively the scientific terms, based mainly on the *Rasárnava.*

In English Alphabetical Order

Abhicára

A rite designed to harm others.
Sáradátilaka,
Saktisamgama,

Abhiseka

Consecration of the Tántric devotee who has holy water sprinkled over him. It is of two broad kinds : *Sáktábhiseka* and *Púrnábhiseka.*

Saradatilaka (Raghavabhatta's comm. iv. 1).
Pranatosini.
Saktisamgama,

Àcára

Rules of conduct as means of spiritual attainment. There are generally seven kinds of such rules; e.g., *Veda, Vaisnava, Saiva, Daksina, Vadma, Siddhanta, Kaula.* These are comprised in two main categories, viz., *Vama* and *Daksina. Kaulamarga-rahasya,*
Pranatosini,
Matrkabheda,

Àdhára

Literally, receptacle. The *Cakra* (q.v.), supposed to exist in the lowest extremity of the spinal cord, is called *Múládhara.*

Nilatantra,

Adhah-ámnáya

One of the six geographical divisions presided over by Buddhist and Jain deities, Vagisvari, Vajrayogini, Nairrtesvari, etc.

Pranatosini,

Saktis mgama, Sundari,

Advas'ofhana

Procedure of purifying the body consisting of six *adhvas,* viz., *varna, pada, mantra, kala, tattva,* and *bhuvana.*

Saradatilaka (Raghavabhatta's comm. on it),

Àdyá Sakti

Primeval energy conceived as a goodess.

Aghamarsana

Literally meaning the wiping off of the sin from the body. It is done by sprinkling water on different parts of the body.

Tantrasára of Krsnananda (on authority of *Malinitantra,*

Àgháta

Pránáyama.

Aghora

(1) A form of Siva, black and fierce, supposed to preside over the Southern region.

Pránatosini, (on authority of *Nirvana-tantra*).

(2) Name of a Siva sect resorting to *Vamacara.*

Saktisamgama, Tara,

(3) One of the broad divisions of Tantric *ácáras,* as distinct from *yoga.*

Àgneya-varna

Letters connected with the element of fire. These are from *Ya* to *Ksa* in order.

Sáradátilaka (Rághavabhatta's comm. on it),

Ajapá

A form of effortless meditation. The sounds *ham* and *sah,* arising automatically due to the movement of breath, constitute this *mantra.* This automatic formation of the *hamsa-mantra* takes place in *múladhára, anáhata* and *ájñacakras. Ajápa* is twofold, secret and open. The latter is sub-divided into two categories, sound and sight. *Gheranda,*

Sáradátilaka, XIV.91 (Rághavabhatta's comm. on it).

Àjñá-cakra

The nerve-plexus between the eyebrows. Looking like a two-petalled white lotus, it is symbolised by the letters *Ha* and *Ksa.*

Satcakranirñpana,

Aksamálá

A rosary of beasds made of *Rudráksa*, crystals, etc.

Akula

Siva aspect of Sakti.

Tantráloka,

Ali

Spirituous liquor used in Tantric worship.

Àlidha

A posture in which the right leg is stretched forward and the left is slightly bent.

Àmnáya

Zone of Tántric culture, five or six in number.

Kulárnava, Saktisamgama, Sundari, V.

Anáhata

(1) A nerve-plexus (*Cakra*) in the region of the heart, supposed to look like a twelve-petalled red lotus.

(2) Name of a particular sound without anything being stuck.

Anavasthollasa

The last stage of spiritual progress, according to some Tantric schools.

Parasuráma-kalpasútra,

Ànavi diksá

A form of Tantric initiation in which *mantra, arcana, asana nyasá, dhyana* and various articles of worship are required. It is of various kinds, e.g., *Spársñ, Vaciki,* etc.

Sáradátilaka, V. 127-40 (Raghavabhatta's comm. on it), *Pranatosini,*

Anganyása

A method of feeling the limbs in a Tantric rite. It is of five or six kinds. The centres are heart, head, protective symbol, eyes and intestine.

Nilatantra,

Antardasara

Internal body of mystic diagrams. Inner shade of the flames of *Cakras,* called *Bindu, Trikona* and *Astakona.* Manifest ray of the *Navatikona* or *Navayonicakra* consisting of nine triangles.

Kámakalávilasa, 30; *Nityásoda-sikarnava,*

Antaryága

Mental worship in which the *Pancatattvas* are conceived as abstract and not tangible things

Mahanirvana,

Gautamiya Tantra,

Gándharva Tantra,

Anukalpa

Substitute, e.g., coconut water for wine.

Àpyáyana

Processing of a mantra.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasara,*

Àrmbha-ullása

First stage of spiritual attainment.

Paras'urámakalpa,

Ardhaparyanka

A sitting posture in which both the legs are on the same pedestal, one knee being bent and the other raised.

Arka : *Jñána-sakti.*

Asamprajñáta Samádhi

Ṣee *Samádhi.*

Àsana

Posture as an accessory of *yoga.*

Astadala-padma

Eight-petalled lotus conceived as a symbol in the making of *Cakras* inside and outside human body as also in diagrams. The petals are stated to; contain the letters *KA, CA, TA, TA, PA, YA, SA, LA.*

Astamátrká

Eight Mother-goddesses supposed to reside in the *Visnurekhá*of *Bhúpura-yantra, Nityásodasi-karnava,* I.

169-71.

Astapása

Eight bonds of human existence, viz., *ghrná* (hatred), *lajja* (shame), *bhaya* (fear), *sanka* (apprehension), *jugupsa* (aversion or reproach), *kula* (pedigree), *sila* (conduct), *jati*, (birth or caste).

Astasiddhi

See *Siddhi*

Astra : Same as *Astrabija* (q.v).

Artrabija

Syllabe *Phat*.

Nilatantra,

Asvakrántá

The vast tract of land extending from the Vindhya hills to the great ocean. In the *Mahásiddhasáratantra*, its western boundary is the river Karatoya in Dinajpur district of West Bengal, and the eastern boundary is in Yavadvipa or Java. According to some authorities it extends from above hill to the west, comprising Persia, Egypt and Rhodesia.

It is one of the three tracts into which India is divided in certain Tantras.

Avadhúta

dvaita-jñána-vihino yah
sarva-bhúta-hite ratah /
tyakta-varnásramah santah
papa-lesa-paranmukhah //
avalipta na kutrapi dhutapapah
sadaiva hi /
avadhutah sa vijneyas-tatkrte
cina-sadhanam //

(1) A Tántric devotee of a very high order.

An *Avadhúta* of the highest grade is called *Kulavadhuta*. *Avadhutas* are divided into two classes : Householders and recluses.

Kulárnava,
Pránatosini,
Mahánirvána,

(2) Name of a nerve.

Avadhúti

The central nerve, according to Buddhists, corresponding to *Susumna* of Hindu Tantra.

Àvaranadevatá

Also called Yogini, presiding over nine *Cakras* called *Prakata, Guptas*, etc., which are different from the well-known *Satcakras*.

Aityasodasikarnava,

(*Setubandha* Comm.).

Avidyá

False knowledge, nescience, *Moha*.

Avìra

Tántric disciple belonging to the probationary stages of *arambha, taruna, yauvana* and *praudha, Parasurama-kalpa-sutram*, (Ramesvara's Comm.).

Àvrtì

Avarana, Veil of delusion.

Avyakta

Unmanifested. Denotes Prakrti (q.v.).

Bahirdasara

External appearance of the mystic diagrams intended to represent five gross and five subtle elements. These elements are symbolised by ten letters beginning with *Ka*.

The ten triangles, representing the theme, are supposed to be presided over by ten goddesses, called Kulakaulayogini.

Nityásodasikárnava,

Bánalinga

A form of Siva-phallus, supposed to reside in the triangle of *Anahata-cakra.*

Bhairava

Paramasiva

Bhairavi Cakra

A ritual in which *Pañcatattvas* are used. In it, males and females participate and indulge in drinking and sexual intercourse.

Mahánirvána,

Kaulávali-nirnaya,

Kularnava,

Bhairavì Mudrá

It is that condition when everything is withdrawn into a person in the shape of his soul.

Bháratì

Same as *Visuddha* (q.v.).

Bhumisparsa

A *mudra* (q.v.) in which the palm of the right hand is turned inward, and the fingers outstretched with the tips of fingers touching the ground.

Bhúpura

A four-cornered figure with four doors and a triangle within.

Gandharva Tantra,

Nityásodasikárnava,

Bhútápsárana

Warding off evil spirits and disturbances by means of mantras.

Saradatilaka,

(Rághava's comm.).

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Bhátasuddhi

Part of a rite in which the five *bhútas* or elements of the body are purified.

Nilatantra,

Bija

(1) Mystic syllables like *Hrim, Hum,* etc.

(2) Semen.

(3) Cidatman.

Bindu

(1) One dot represents undivided manifestation of Siva.

(2) Double dot (*Visarga*) represents Sakti.

(3) According to Saivas, an evolute of *Nada.*

(4) In Kashmir-Saivism, one of the ten *Vidyá-tattavas.*

(5) *Prána.* According to some, it has three forms, *Prakas'a* (static), *Vimarsa* (kinetic) and *Prakas'a-Vimarsa* (combination of both).

Sáradátilaka,

Tantráloka,

Prapañcasára,

Kámakalávilása, (Cidvalli).

Brahmadvára

The passage through which *Kundalini* (q.v.) moves.

Brahmagranthi

One of the three knots in the *Múládhára-cakra. Nilatantra*

Brahmándi

Same as *Susumná* (q.v.).

Brahmapura : Human body.

Brahmarandhra

An aperture in the crown of the head, through which the soul or vital breath is supposed to escape on its leaving the body.

Brahmavartman : Same as *Susumna* (q.v.).

Cakra

(a) The six mystical circles or nerve-plexuses, supposed to exist within the body from the lower extremity of the spinal cord up to the head. The circles in the ascending order are : *Múládhára, Svádhisthána, Manipúra, Anáhata, Visuddha, Àjñá.*

The *Sahasrára-padma* (1000-petalled lotus) is supposed to be located within the crown of the head.

(b) Designation of an assembly of Tantric devotees for certain rites, e.g., *Bhairavi Cakra.*

(c) Endless rotation of Sakti.

(d) *Yantra* or mystic diagram, e.g., *Trikonacakra, Astakonacakra.*

See *Satcakranirupana.*

Cakrapújá

A Tántric worship in the company of some tantric devotees under the leadership of the *Guru.*

Nilatantra,

Cakrabheda

Literally, penetration of *Cakras.* Manifestation or activation

which is necessary for keeping the body fit and for attainment of *Siddhis.* A Tántric *Sádhaná.*

Caksusi diksa

A form of initiation in which the *Guru* initiates his disciple by a more glance.

Kularnava,

Saradatilaka,

(Rághava's comm.).

Candra

A Vámacári sect.

Saktisamgama, Tárá,

Candrakalá

Symbol of cresent moon supposed to exist on the crown of the goodess, from which nectar is believed to exude.

Mahánirvána,

Candranadi

Another name of *Ida* (q.v.), supposed to represent Sakti in the form of the moon.

Satcakranirúpana, I.

Caramálá

Rosary of *Rudráksa*, crystal, etc., for *Japa* or muttering the name of god.

Krsnanánda's

Tantrasára,

Caturdasara

A diagram constituted by 14 triangles each of which is presided over by a goddess. Such goddesses are called Sampradá-ya-yoginis. It is believed to lead to the acquisition of *Isitva,* one of the *Siddhis* (q.v.).

Nityásodasikárnava,

Gandharvatantra,

Caturvimsatitattva

24 fundamental things also recognised in Tantra. These are five gross elements, five subtle elements, five sensory organs, five motor organs, mind, intellect., egotism, primordial substance (*prakrti*).

Catuskútá

A particular arrangement of letters for use in the cult of Srividya.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Chotiká

Syllable *Phat.*

Cinácára

A mode of Kaulacara.

Tárátantra,

Citrini

Name of a nerve, also called *Brahma-nádi*. Sometimes regarded as one of the three constituents of *Susumná* (q.v.); often identified with *Susumna.*

Pránatosini,

Cúdácakra

A kind of spiritual exercise for *Vira* type of devotees. It involves *Laya-yoga* (q.v.).

Dákinì

A class of minor deities associated with Parvati, Chinna-masta, etc. Supposed to be the presiding deity of *Múládhára.*

Pránatosini

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Satcakranirúpana,

Daksinácára

Orthodox way of spiritual attainment without *Pañcama-kára* in conformity with Veda, Smrti and Purána. *Vedácara, Vaisnavácára* and *Saivácára* are included in it.

Daksinamárga

Same as *Daksinácára* (q.v.).

Daksinasrotatantra

Tantras belonging to the southern current, viz., *Yogini-jala, Yoginihrdaya, Mantra-malini, Aghoresì, Kriághore-svarì, Lakinìkalpa, Marici, Mahámarìci.*

Dámara

It denotes uproar, affray, riot, the bustle and confusion of festivity or strife. It stands for a class of Tantras, stated to have been narrated by Siva.

Dasasamskára

See *Samskára.*

Dasamahávidyá

Ten tántric goddesses : Káli, Tárá, Sodasi, Bhuvanesvari, Bhairavi, Chinnamasta, Dhumavati, Vagalá, Mátangi, Kamalá. *Pránatosini,*

Dehasádhana

Same as *Káyasádhana* (q.v.)

Devacakra

A kind of *Cakra* ritual.

Devicakra

Same as *Cakra* (q.v.).

Devyastra

The mystic syllables *HRIM PHAT*

Nìlatantra, II. 7.

Dháranayantra

A diagram usually used as an amulet. It is drawn on a leaf, and dedicated to a deity.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára*,

Saktisamgama, Tara, L.

Dhárani

Protective spell used by Tantric Buddhists.

Dhátusakti

Designation of Dákini, Rákinì, etc., the presiding deities of *Cakras*.

Dhyána

Meditation on a deity.

Basic element in Tantric *Sadhána* and an accessory of Yoga.

Digambara

(1) A naked order of *Avadhutas* (q.v.) having the quality of Siva.

(2) A *Vámácári* sect.

Pranatosini, VII. 7,

Saundaryalahari, (Laksmi comm.).

Dìksá

Initiation, According to *Visvasara Tantra*, it is of four kinds, viz., *Kriyávatì, Kalavati, Varnamayi* and *vedhamayi*. *Pránatosini*,

According to *Kularnava* it is sevenfold, viz., *Kriya, Varna, Kala, Sparsa, Vak, Drk* and *Manasa*. Each of these is subdivided.

According to Rudrayamala, it is of three forms, viz., *Anavi, Sakti* and *Sambhavi*.

Pránatosini,

Other types are *Karma, Pancayatana* and *Ekamantra*, etc.

Dìpana

Processing of *mantra*.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrásara*,

Divya-bháva

The highest spiritual attainment of a Tantric devotee.

Divyacakra

Name of a *Cakra* ritual, in which the *Pañcatattvas* are used, meant for those who have made considerable spiritual progress.

Mahánirvána,

Divyamudrá

Same as *Khecarimudra* (q.v.).

Divyatattva

A category of *Pañcatattva* (q.v.).

Divyaugha

A line of succession of Tantric *gurus*.

Syámárahasya,

(quotation from *Bhavacudamani*).

Drk-diksá

Same as *Caksusi diksá* (q.v.).

Duti

Same as *Lata* (q.v.).

Dútiyága

Ritual union of a Tántric devotee with his female partner. Her organ is fancied as sacrificial fire into which the semen of the male partner, conceived as

clarified butter, is offered. *Parasuráma-kalpasútra,*

Ekalinga

A field or a place in which (up to five krosas) there is but one *Sivalinga*; designation of a *Sivalinga* at such a place.

Nilatantra,

Gajakrántá

Same as *Asvakrántá* (q.v.).

Gandhástaka

Eight fragrant substances taken together and used as substitute for wine of three kinds — *Sakti-sambandhi, Sivasambandhi* and *Visnusambandhi.*

Sáradátilaka,

Gauda Sampradaya

A sect of Tantric devotees belonging to eastern India and following *Vámácára.* It depends entirely on *Pancatattva* (q.v.), and advocates the unity of devatá, *guru* and *mantra* as manifestation of the energy of the Great Goddess.

Purascaryárnava,

Saktisamgama, Sundarì,

Gauripatta

Base upholding *Sivalinga.* Looking like the female organ, it is also called *yoni.*

Gáyatri

The basic *mantra* of an initiated *dvija.*

Grhávadhúta

An *Avadhúta* (q.v.) leading the life of a householder.

Pránatosini,

Gunaspanda

Qualities of *Sattva*, etc.

Guptatarayogini

Designation of goddesses who are *Àvaranadevatas* (q.v.).

Gandharvantantra,

Gupti

Keeping the *mantra* secret.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Gurubija

Letters H, S, KH, M, L, V, R, Y, Um.

Hádividyá, Hádimata

Vidyá, denoting knowledge, *mantra* or deity, emanating from *Kámarája bijá.*

A school named after *Ha,* the symbol of Siva, and influential in Kerala and Kashmir.

Saktisamgama, Tara,

Hákini

Presiding deity of the *Ajna-cakra* (q.v.), conceived as six-faced and white in complexion.

Satcakranirupana.

Hamsa

(1) Supreme Soul, Brahman.

(2) A symbolic *mantra* involving inhalation (*ham*) and exhalation (*sa*) of breath. Same as *Ajapá* (q.v.). Regarded as *Para-mamantra.* It is of two kinds, *Vyakta* (manifest) and *Gupta* (hidden).

Ham is the symbol of *Bindu* (*Purusa*, Male Principle of Creation, and *Sah* of *Visarga*)

(Prakrti, Female Principle).

Satcakranirupana,

(Observations of Kalicarana).

Hamsa-mantra

Also called *Ajapá-mantra*. Name of the *mantra*, consisting of *ham* and *sah* symbolism, for the awakening of *Kundalini* (q.v.).

Hamsapitha

Region of *Hamsa*, supposed to exist within *Sahasaras* (q.v.). Indicated by *A-KA-THA* triangle, and marked by letters *HA-LA-KSA*. In it, the devotee should meditate on *guru* as identical with Siva.

Padukapancaka, I

(Kalicarana's Comm.).

Hárdhakalá

(1) Sex-organ drawn on mystic diagrams. Also known as *Hamsapada* or *Yoni*.

(2) Wave of bliss resulting from Siva-Sakti union.

Hathayoga

A kind of forced *yoga* or abstract meditation performed with great self-mortification, such as standing on one leg. In it, the mind is forced to withdraw from external objects.

In the *Yogasikhopanisad* (I-33), it is described as the unity of the sun (*Ha*) and the moon (*Tha*).

In the *Hathayoga-pradipika* (I.10), it is regarded as the source of all kinds of *Yoga*.

Havisya

Food prepared with rice that has been dried in the sun.

Nilatantra,

Homa

A rite in which oblation is poured into fire. It is of various kinds, e.g., *Sthúla* (gross), *Súksma* (subtle), *Pará* (transcedental), *Báhya* (external), *Àntara* (internal), *Nigraha* (harmful act), *Saumya* (beneficial), etc.

Mátrkábheda,

Tantraŕaja,

Krsnananda's *Tantrasara*,

Sáradátilaka,

Tárábhakti-sudharnava,

Nilatantra,

Hotri diksá

A type of initiation in which the *guru* performs *homa* for purifying the six quarters.

Sáradátilaka,

Hsien (Chinese)

Immortality

Hrllekha

The Bija *Hrim*.

Nilatantra,

Idá

One of the fourteen main nerves. Symbol of the moon, it is on the left of the spinal cord. Supposed to be of white colour.

Satcakranirúpana, I.

Iddhi (from *Rddhi*)

Miraculous power stated in Buddhist texts like the *Brahma-jála-sutta*,

Cullavagga,

11m (Arabic)

According to Sufis, knowledge gathered from experience.

Indrayoni

A nerve-plexus between *Visuddha* and *Àjñá Cakras.*

Indu : *Kriyasakti.*

Indubìjá

Dram.

Nilatantra,

Isitva

A kind of *Siddhi* (q.v).

Istamantra

The *mantra* taught by one's *guru.*

Itaralinga

A form of *Siva-linga.*

Saradatilaka, IV.

Japa

Muttering or repeating a *mantra*, or the name of a deity.

Kulárnava,

Saktisamgama, Tárá,

Gandharvantantra,

It is of three kinds, viz., *Vyakta* (expressed), *Avyakta* (unexpressed), *Suksma* (subtle), also called, respectively, *Vacika, Upámsu* and *Mánasa.*

Játakusuma

Menstrual blood of a woman.

Nilatantra,

Játasútaka

Newely born child. *Mantra* is conceived during initiation

as a newely born child.

Saktisamgama, Tárá,

Jìvana

Processing a *mantra.*

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára*,

Jivanmukti

Liberation in life.

Jivasakti

Name of *Cundálinì*, the vital energy within the body.

Tantraraja Tantra,

Jñánahoma

Homa performed in internal worship.

Pránatosinì,

(Quotation from *Nityatantra*).

Jyesthá

A destructive Sakti by which Sivahood of extremely enlightened persons is obstructed.

Jyotirdhyána

Meditation on the Self, believed to reside in *Kundalinì* (q.v.) in the form of light. Also called *Tejodhyána.*

Kádaimata

A principal Tantric school with Ka as its symbol. Texts in glorification of Mahatripurasundari, especially those describing the mode of Her worship, etc., are known chiefly under two divisions,one of which is *Madhumatìmata* or *Kádimáta.*

The *Tantraraja, Matrkarnava, Tripurarnava* and *Yoginihrdaya* come under this class.

Saktisamgama, Tara

Do, Kali,

Kádividyá (Kádimata)

Knowledge deriving its name from the initial letter of *Vágshava Bija* (q.v.).

Sáradátilaka,

Kahádimata

One of the three main Tantric doctrines.

Saktisamgama, Tara,

Kákinì

(1) Presiding deity of the *Anáhata Cakra* (q.v.), conceived as yellow and residing within a twelve-petalled red lotus.

Satcakranirúpana,

(2) *KA* is called *Kákinì Bija.*

Kalá

(1) Aspect of the Great Mother Goddess, symbolically represented by *varna* or letter. 38 *Kalás* are supposed to have emanated from the three groups of letters, called *Saumya, Saura* and *Àgneya.*

Prapañcasára,

Saradatilaka,

According to another tradition, 50 *Kalás* emanated from the five constituents of *Pranava* (*Omkára*), viz., *A, U, MA, Bindu, Náda.*

Sáradátilaka,

(2) Prakrti, Sakti, Máyá.

Sáradátilaka,

Prapañcasára,

(3) Letters from *À* to *KSA.*

(4) *Náda.*

Kálacakra

A minor nerve-cycle above *Visuddha Cakra* (q.v.) but below the *Àjñácakra* (q.v.). Also known as *Lalaná-cakra*, it denotes the wheel of time and the chief deity of Tántric Buddhists' *Kálacakrayána.*

Kalá (Vatì) diksá

A form of initiation in which the *guru* locates the five *Kalás*, called *Nivrtti, Pratisthá, Vidhyá, Sánti* and *Santyatita* in different parts of the body of the disciple and anoints him.

Kálámúkha

A Vámáchari Saiva sect, much similar of Kápálikas. They are known to have dwelt in South India.

Kalámúrti

Framentary form of the figure of Sakti.

Sakti of any deity is divided into sixteen parts (*Kalá*).

Garland of Letters,

Kalányása

Perception of the deity in different parts of the body of the female partner of the devotee.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Kálibija

The syllable *Krìm.*

Kálìmata

Texts in glorification of Mahatripurasundari, especially those describing the mode of her worship, etc., are known chiefly under two divisions, one of which is the *Kálimata* or *Malinimata.*

Kámabìja

The syllables *Klim, Krom*, etc.

Kámakalá

(1) Sexual art.

(2) Imagined as Mahátripurasundari, it is of the nature of *Cit* (consciousness), *Ànanda* (bliss), *icchá* (will), *Jnana* (knowledge) and *Kriya* (action). It is supposed to be in a triangle within the *Candramandala* of the *Sahasrarapadma* (q.v.). It is regarded as a combination of the three *Bindus* of *Ravi, Agni* and *Soma*. In some Tantras, Kama is the equilibrium of Prakása (static) and *Vimarsa* (dynamic) *Sakti* of Siva.

Nityásodasikárnava,

(*Setubandha* comm.).

Satcakranirúpana,

(Observations of Kálìcarana).

Kámakálavilása, *Cidvalli* (comm.).

Kámamandira

House for union with *Sakti*.

Nìlatantra,

Kámarajabija

Designation of letters *HA, SA, KA, HA, LA, HRAN*, each symbolising an aspect of Sakti or Vidyá.

Sáradátilaka,

Kámesibija or Kámabija

The syllable *Klim* or *Klhrim*.

Kámika

Name of the seat for *Kámya Japa* or the muttering of a *mantra* name of a deity for a special purpose. Made of the skin of deer, tiger or ram or cane.

Purascaryárnava,

Kañcuka : *Pása*, evil, *Máyá*, etc.

Kápálika

An extremist Saiva resorting to the cult of Sakti, and drinking wine in human skulls.

Saktisamgama, Káli,

Karamálá

The hand used as a rosary.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára*,

Nilatantra,

Karamkini Mudrá

According to those, who have attained perfect knowledge, it is a mental state when the body of the five elements rests in the great firmament, and the world appears to be like a corpse and devoid of all actions.

Karana

In astronomy it is the name given to half of a *tithi*.

Kárana

Wine used in Tántric rituals. The word means caused. Such wine is supposed to be the cause of knowledge of *dharma, artha, káma,* and *moksa*. *Pránatosini*..

Karanyása

Part of a rite in which the hand is placed in a particular position. In it, the fingers and the reverse of the palm are used to invoke deities in the form of letters.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára*,

Nilatantra,

Kartarì

A *mantra* of two letters.

Tantraraja,

Kartriká

A kind of *Astra* (q.v.) or weapon which is seen in the

land of *Àdyá-Sakti.*

Nilatantra.

Kásmira Sampradáya

Tantric devotees of Kashmir. *Saktisamgama*, Sundari,

Purascaryárnava,

Kaula

One who performs Tantric rites with five *Makáras*, i.e., follows *Kulacara*.

Kaulas are divided into many sects, e.g., Kapalika, Ksapanaka, Digambara.

Nilatantra,

Kaulamárga

A way of spiritual exercise (*ácára*) confined within the spiritual lineage of a particular group (*Kula*).

In it, the devotee worships with the *Pancamakaras.*

It is of two kinds, wet and dry.

Kaulamárga-rahasya,

Nirvána-tantra,

Kularnava,

Rudrayámala, Uttara,

Kaulajnananirnaya,

Mahanirvana,

Kaulavalinirnaya,

Pranatosini,

Krsnananda's *Tantrasára*,

Warning against abuse of *Kaulamárga, Parasuráma-Kalpa-sutra*,

Mahánirvána,

Kaulika

Same as *Kaula* (w. v.).

One who follows the *Kula* or *Kaula* mode of *Sadhaná*, *Nirvánatantra*, XI. *Kulárnava*,

Nilatantra,

Kaulika Sakti

Same as *Khecari Sakti* (q.v.).

Kaulika Siddhi

Moksa according to *Kulamata* of Kashair Saivism.

Paratrimsika,

Kaulini

Same as *Kundalini* (q.v.).

Kavaca

Prayer with certain mystic syllables supposed to protect the devotee as an armour protects the body. Protective spell.

Syámárahasya,

Kerala Sampradáya

A Tántric secft whose followers are spread over 19 countries from *Àryávarta* to the sea.

Saktisamgama, Kálì,

Siddhánta-samgraha.

Puras'caryarnava,

Khapuspa

Menstrual blood.

Khecarì Mudrá

A Yogic posture which leads to spiritual attainment, and enables a person to overcome disease and death. By this *mudrá* movement on the outskirts of the sky of *Cit*

becomes possible.

Gheranda,

Khecari Sakti

Kha means Brahman.

The power, which moves as the kinetic energy of Brahman, is called *Khecari.*

Though one, it is manifested in various forms.

Paratrimsika,

Kilaka

Literally a small stick,

It is a kind of *Nyása* (q.v.).

Nìlatantra,

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Kosa

Sheath. The Human body is supposed to consist of the five sheaths as follows :

Annamaya, Pránamaya, Manomaya, Vijñánamaya, Ànandamaya.

Kramadáksá

A type of initiation to the *mantras* of Kali, Tárá and Tripurasundari, meant for certain special kinds of devotees.

Pránatosini,

Kramamata

A Tántric system of Kashmir, dealt with in Abhinavagupta's *Kramakeli* and *Krama-stotra.* It is twofold according as it relates to Saivism and Sáktism.

Tantráloka,

Kriyásakti

Three kinds of mystic power, viz., *Maojavitva* (having

speed like mind), *Kámarúpitva* (assuming forms at will), *Vikaranadha-rmitva* (infinite mental power to consume and transmit).

Krìyavati dìksá

A form of initiation in which many rituals are performed, and the *guru* santifies the disciple's body; inculcates his own consciousness into the disciple.

Pránatosinì,

Kriyáyoga

A kind of yogic exercise, *Sakti-samgama*, Sundari,

Krodhani Mudrá

According to those, who have achieved success in *mantra*, it means that which is contained in the 24 *tattvas.*

Krtyá

An evil goddess supposed to cause harm.

Nìlatantra,

Kula

(1) Family and the mode of worship handed down by the tradition of the family.

(2) Tantric rite obtaining in a particular region with reference to a particular deity.

(3) The Sastra which expounds the group of objects including the knower, the known and the knowledge or the worshipper and the object of worship.

(4) Body.

(5) *Àdháracakra.* Constituents of the word are *Ku* (earth) and liyate (merges).

(6) Spiritual lineage from Paramasiva to one's own guru.

Lalitásahasranáma, I

(*Saubhágyabháskara* comm.).

Kulabhakta

One who is devoted to a *Kaulika Sádhaka.*

Nilatantra,

Kulacakra

A kind of Tántric rite in which several devotees assemble.

Nilatantra,

Kulácára

Same as *Kaulamárga* (q.v.).

Nìlátantra,

Kuladravya

Same as *Pañcatattva* (q.v.).

Kauláválinirnaya,

Nilatantra,

Kuladrsti

Sight of Kuladevi; *Kaulika's.*

Sight of the desired deity.

Nilatantra,

Kulajana

A devotee of the *Kaulika* class.

Nilatantra,

Kulajña

One who knows *Kulacara.*

Nilatantra,

Kulajñána

Knowledge of *Kulamárga.*

Parasurama-kalpasutra,

(Ramesvara's comm.).

Kulakaulayogini

Presiding goddesses of *Cakras* of the *Bahir-dasára* (q.v.) class.

Gandharvatantra,

Kulakundalinì

Same as *Kundalini* (q.v.).

Kulamárga

Same as *Kaulamarga* (q.v.)

Kulamrta

Nectar flowing down from the *Candramandala* within the head when *Kundalini* (q.v.) penetrates the six *Cakras.*

Kulanáyaka

Best among the *Kaulika Sadhakas,* Heree Siva.

Nilatantra,

Kulapadma

Six-petalled lotus within *Sahasrára* (q.v.).

Kulapatha

The passage through which Kundalini (q.v.) ascends.

Saundaryalahari,

Kulaoújana

Worship of the desired deity of a *Kaula* (q.v.).

Nilatantra,

Kulapuspa

Flowers like *Rakta-javá* (red China rose); here it means the menstrual blood of a woman.

Nilatantra,

Kularasa

Sváyambhu-kusuma or menstrual blood of a woman.

Nilatantra,

Kulasamketa

Technical mysteries of *Kaulamárga* (q.v.), e.g., *Krama-sanketa, Pújá-sanketa, Mantra-sanketa,* etc.

Niruttara,

Kulárnava,

Parasuráma-kalpasútra

(Ramesvara's comm.).

Kulasástra

Kulárnava, Kaulávali-nirnaya, etc.

Nilatantra,

Kulasundra

Great *Kaulika* (q.v.).

Nilatantra,

Kulasundarì

Feminine gender of *Kulasundara* (q.v.).

Kulatattva

Same as *Kuladravya.*

Kulávadhúta

See *Avadhuta.*

Kulávidyá

The mantra used by a *Kaulika.*

Nilatantra,

Kula-vrksa

The following trees regarded as sacred by *Kaulas* : *Slesmátaka, Karañjaka, Nimba, Asvattha, Kadamba, Plaksa, Vata, Udumbara, Cinca.*

Nilatantra,

Kulayosit

Also called *Kaulini*, it is the name of *Kundalinì* (q.v.).

Saundaryalaharì

(Laksmidhara's comm.).

Kulluká

Designation of a *mantra* recited before *japa* after the worship of *Mahávidyá.*

Nilatantra,

Kulodaka

Semen.

Nilatantra,

Kumbhaka

A kind of *Pránáyáma* in which the breath is held up.

Nilatantra,

Kundagolodbhava

'Menstrual blood, regarded as sacred for the Goddess. *Kundodbhava* is the blood of a married woman, and *Golod-bhava* is of a widow'.

N. N. Bhattacharya.

Hist. of Tantric Religion, p.443. The word *Kunda*, occurring in the *Manusmrti*, iii. 156, 158, 178, and *Yájñavalkya-smrti*, I. 10, 222, 224, has been interpreted as an illegitimate issue of a Brahmin woman, whose husband is alive, by another Bráhmin male.

The word *Goia*, occuring in *Manusmrti*, III. 156, 174 and *Yájñavalkya-smrti*, I. 10, 222, has been taken to denote an offspring of the clandestine union of a Brahmin widow and a Brahmin male.

Kundalini

The serpent, symbol of vital energy, supposed to coil

around the *Múladhára* (q.v.).

Tantraràja,

Gheranda,

Satcakranirúpana,

Saradàtilaka,

Nilatantra,

Prànatosinì,

Màtrkàbheda,

Rudrayamàla, Uttara

Saundarya-lahari, (Laksmi-dhara).

Kúrcabija

The mystic syllable *HUM.*

Kurukullá

Letters, *A, E.*

Laghimá

See *Siddhi.*

Lákini

Presiding deity of *Manipura Çakra* (q.v.).

Laksmì

Name of *bija Srim.*

Nilatantra,

Lalanácakra

See *Kálacakra, Lambikagra.*

Lambikágra

A nerve-circle located above the *Visuddha* and below the *Àjñá*. Also called *Lalana* or *Kalacakra.*

Latá

Sakti or woman with whom one should associate or

perform *Maithuna* as part of a Tántric Pújá.

Also called *Dúti.*

Latásádhana

Ritual involving.

Pañcamakara.

Layabhogánga-vidhána

Process of separating *Malas* or *Pásas* (q.v.) from the body. A part of *Smárti dìksá* (q.v.).

Sáradàtilaka,

Purascaryárnava,

Layasiddhiyoga-samádhi

State of perfect bliss. In it, the devotee acquires spiritual power, and enjoys the pleasure like sexual enjoyment leading to the realisation of identity with the Supreme Being.

Gheranda,

Layayoga

A form of *Hathayoga* which destroys all mundane desires and leads to eternal bliss by bringing about the merger of one's mind in the Supreme Being.

Lelìhána Mudrá

According to Sáktas, that which licks everything again and again.

Linga

Male organ worshipped as Siva-phallus.

Lingapuspa

The flower, called *Raktakaravì*, used as a substitute for sexual union.

Parasuráma-kalpasútra,

Lopámudrá

Mantras, relating to *Srividyá*, consisting of 15 symbolic letters.

Krsnananda's *Tantrasara*,

Madhyamá

A kind of sound midway between *Pasyanti* (q.v.) and *Vaikhari* (q.v.). Connected with intellect. Represents equilibrium of *Para* and *Pasyanti*.

Prapañcasára,

Kámakalávilása,

Lalitásahasranáma,

(Saubhágyabháskara).

Madhyamasrota Tantra

Tantras belonging to the middle current, viz., *Vijaya, Nihsvása, Sváyambhuva, Vátula, Vìrabhadra, Raurava, Makuta* and *Viresa*.

Mahácakra

A *Cakra* ritual in which one's mother, sister, daughter, daughter-in-law and wife are to be worshipped as *Pañcasakti*.

Nirtuttara,

Mahácinácára, Mahácìnakrama

Same as *Cinácára* (q.v.).

Maháhrada

Pure *Cidatman*.

Mahámámsa

Flesh of the following creatures, regarded as sacred for offering to the deity :

man, cow, ram, horse, buffalo, boar, goat, deer.

Syámárahasya,

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasara*,

Mahamudra

(1) A form of posture.

Gheranda,

(2) Woman in general.

(3) Female organ.

Mahápasu

An uninitiated person.

Nirtuttara,

Mahásámrájya-diksá

A form of initiation which is an essential prerequisite of *Kaula Sádhana*.

Mahásetu

Designation of a *mantra* recited before *japa* after the worship of a *Mahávidyá*.

Higher from of Setu (q.v.).

Nilatantra,

Mahávidyá

Ten Tántric goddesses whose names vary in different texts. They are usually called *Kali, Tara, Sodasi, Bhuvanesvari, Bhairavì, Chinnamastá, Dhumavári, Vagalá, Mátangì, Kamalá, Pránatosini*,

It is interesting to note that the term also denotes *Kevalánvayihetu*, i.e., a purely positive *probans* in logic or Nyáyasástra (Vide *Mahavidya-vidambana* of Vádìndra, ed. M. R. Telang, Baroda, 1920).

Mahimá

A kind of *siddhi* (q.v.).

Maithuna

Sexual intercourse, considered as one of the five

Makáras.

Mahánirvána,

Pránatosini,

Mala

Fetters causing rebirth and suffering of worldly existence. Threefold, viz., *Ànava, Kárma* and *Máyiya.*

Málinimata

Same as *Kálìmata* (q.v.).

Mánasa diksá

Same as *Manodiksa* (q.v.).

Mánavaugha

A line or succession of Tantric *gurus.*

Mandala

(1) A period of 49 days.

Nilatantra,

(2) A ritual *Cakra* in which the devotees, sitting with their female partners around the leader, indulge in the enjoyment of five *Makaras.*

Kauĺávalinirnaya,

Mahánirvána,

(3) Diagrams like *Sarvato-bhadra,* used in Tantric rituals.

Manipura

A *Cakra* near the navel region, also called *Nábhicakra.* Conceived as a 10-petalled lotus of blue colour, each petal containing a letter. Within the lotus is conceived a triangle of the colour of the rising sun. The outer sides of the triangle are represented by three *svastika* symbols.

Satcakra-nirúpana,

Nilatantra,,

Manodiksá

A form of initiation merely by the *guru's* thought and mental action.

Kulárnava,

Manonmana

Transcendental bliss coming out as a result of *bhaktiyoga-samádhi.*

Gheranda,

Mantra

Generally incantation relating to a male deity.

Mantra-adhva

Blood to be purified for *Sádhana. Adhva* denotes a constituent of the body which is of six kinds, viz., *Bhuvana* (cerebral organ), *Mantra* (blood and flesh), *Pada* and *Varna* (muscles and vein), *Dhátu* and *Reta* (bones and fluids). *Saradátilaka,* V. 24-25 (Rághavabhatta).

Mantracaitanya

Consciousness, inherent in *mantra,* to be roused by exertion.

Pránatosini,

Gandharvatantra,

Mantrayána

Name of Tántric Buddhism.

Mántrì diksá

A form of initiation in which the *guru* at first purifies himself and then conscerates his disciple.

Sárádátilaka,

Pránatosini,

Manu

Mantra.

Nilatantra,

Márana

The rite for killing.

Marifat

According to Sufis, knowledge obtained through divine-grace.

Mátr : Yogiñi, Sakti Kalá.

Mátrká : See *Astamátrká.*

Mátrkányása

Perception of *Mátrkás* (q.v.) in the forms of letters in different parts of the body. Twofold — *Antarmátrká-nyása* and *Bahirmátrká-nyása,*

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasara,*

Mátrkárna

Mátrkávarna; letter of the alphabet.

Nálatantra,

Mátrkávarna

See *Mátrkárna.*

Máyá

Name of *Bija Hrim.*

Nilatantra

Máyábija

Hrim.

Nálatantra,

Máyiya mala : Such a feeling as 'I', 'Mine'.

Meru

The bead in a rosary, through which the ends of the thread pass before being tied in a knot.

Nilatantra,

Mudrá

(i) Derived from root *Mud*, it literally means that which gives delight. Poses of hand or fingers used in worship, e.g., Matsya, Kúrma, Samkha, etc.

The *Gheranda-samhita*

mentions 20 *Mudrás.*

(ii) Posture of the body at the time of *yoga.*, e.g., *Asviini Mudrá.*

(iii) One of the five *Makáras* essential in Tantric *Sádhana.* It means fried or parched cereals, e.g., *Yogiñi-tantra,* or geometrical figures.

(iv) In Buddhist Tantra it denotes woman. The *Pragñopáya* and *Sekoddesatika* (p. 56) take to mean a woman with whom a Tántric Yogin associates.

Mudrávirya

Condition of *Khecarì* (q.v.).

Mukta-trivenì

Same as *Àjñá* (q.v.).

Múla

(1) Also called *Múládhára* (q.v.).

(2) *Mulamantra* (q.v.).

Múlacakra

Same as *Muladhara* (q.v.).

Milatantra,

Múládhára

The lowest of the six *Cakaras* (q.v.), supposed to be at the lowest extremity of the spinal cord where *Kundalinì* (q.v.) is supposed to reside.

Satcakranirúpana,

Múlamantra

The main or basic *mantra* imparted by one's spiritual preceptor at the time of initiation.

Múlavidyá

Same as *Múlamantra* (q.v.).

Nìlatantra,

Mursid

Guru or spiritual preceptor according to Sufis.

Nábhipadma

Same as *Manipura* (q.v.).

Satcakranirúpana,

Náda

Sound. First vibration of Pará Sakti expressing itself in creation. Manifestation of the consciousness of the Supreme Being, revealed in sound.

Sáradátilaka, I. 6ff.

Satcakranirúpana,

(Kálicarana).

Prapancasara,

Nádi

Artery or vein in the body. Supposed to be 72,000 in number. Of these, 72 are the major ones, of which again the three most important are *Ida, Pingalá,* and *Susumná.*

Pránatosinì,

Nakulì

Ha.

Nakulisa

Ham.

Napumsaka mantra

A *mantra* which is neither male (i.e., meant for deities) nor female (i.e., meant for female deities).

Saradátilaka,

Napumsaka Varna

Letters *R* and *L.*

Sáradátilaka,

(Raghavabbatta).

Narácamudrá

A hand-pose in which the tip of the right thumb is joined with the top mark of the right forefinger and then stretched out while other fingers are bent low.

Natì

Dancing woman, Goddess (Sakti) supposed to dance in delight at the performance of rituals.

Niruttara,

Navacakra

Nine *Cakaras,* of which five belonging to Sakti and pointing upward and four to Siva pointing downward, constituting the *Sriyantra* which is looked upon as the bodies of Siva and Sakti, joined together.

Saundaryalahaì, IX.

(Laksmìdhara's comm.).

Nityásodasikárnava,

(*Setubandha* comm.).

Navanáda

(1) Nine *Nádas* or special kinds of sound, supposed to reveal the nature of *Kundalini.*

Kámakalávilása,

(*Cidvalli*).

(2) Letters A, initial letter of each *Varga, Ya, Sa* and *Ksa*.

Saundaryalaharì,

(Laksmìdhara).

Nimesa Sakti

Will power, by which the concept of Sadasiva is characterised in Kashmir Saivism.

Isvarapratyabhijñá,

Nirvikalpa Samádhi

Blissful state of mind in which the distinction of the knower, knowledge and object of knowledge is obliterated.

Nyása

(1) A part of Tantric ritual, in which dities are placed (i.e., felt) on different limbs of the body.

There are various types of *Nyasa*, e.g., *Mátrkányása* (feeling *Mátrkás*), *Pitha-nyasa* (feeling the holy resorts of Sakti), etc.

(2) Subtle identification with *Cakras*.

Krsnananda's Tantrasara,

Nilatantra,

Odra-puspa

Javá flower.

Also called *Japá*. China rose.

Odra was the name of modern Orissa. Perhaps, it was believed that this flower originally used to grow in Orissa.

Padmásana

A sitting posture, in which the right foot is placed on the left thigh and vice versa.

Pañcabandhana

Five fetters as a result of *Avidyá* (false knowledge).

Pañcabhuta

Five gross elements, viz., Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Ether.

Pancagavya

Five products of the cow, viz., cowdung, cow's urine, milk, curd and ghee.

Nilatantra,

Pañcakalá

Five aspects of Sakti, viz., *Nivrtti, Pratisthá, Vidya, Santi* and *Santyatita*.

Sáradátilaka,

Pañcakañcuka

Five impure material elements, viz., *Kalá, Niyati, Kála, Vidyá* and *Rága*, which causes bondage of different kinds.

Pañcakles'a

Five letters, viz., *Avidyá*, (false knoweldge), *Asmitá* (egotism), *Raga* (attachment), *Dvesa* (hatred) and *Abhinives'a* (adherence).

Paácakriyá or Paácakrtya

Five actions of Sakti, viz.,

Srsti (Creation),

Sthiti (Preservation),

Samhára (Destruction),

Troidhána (Disappearance),

Anugráha (Favour),

Tantraloka,

Pañcamakára

Five things, whose names begin with the letters *Ma*, necessary for Tántric *Sádhana*. These are *Madya*,

Mámsa, Matsyá, Mudra, Maithuna.

Pañcámnáya

Five *Àmnáyas* (zones) well-known for Tántriç culture.

Pañcamundi

An *ásana* (seat), for Tántric *Sadhana*, made with the severed heads of two Candálas, one jackal, one monkey and one snake..

Paácarátra

Originally used, in *Satapatha Bráhmana*, as an adjective of *Purusamedha*, it later came to be used as an independent word meaning a sacrifice to be performed in five successive nights. The word has been interpreted in as many as eight different ways. (Vide K. D. Bharadvaj's paper 'Pañcarátra' in *Aruna Bhárati*, A. N. Jani Fel. Vol., pp. 59 ff.) The *Pañcarátra* deals with philosophy, meditation, temple architecture and iconography and some matters peculiar to the sect.

Pañca Sakti

Mother, sister, daughter, daughter-in-law and preceptor's wife worshipped as five great Sáktis.

Niruttara,

Pañca Preta

Brahmá, Visnu, Rudra, Isa, Sadásiva, forming the seat of Goddess, together called *Panca Preta*.

Pañcatanmátra

Five subtle elements, viz., *Sabda, Sparsa, Rúpa, Rasa, Gandha,* corresponding, respectively, to Sky or Ether, Wind, Fire, Water and Earth.

Pañcánga-suddhi

Fivefold purification, viz., *átma-suddhi, sthána-suddhi, mantra-suddhi, dravya-suddhi and deva-suddhi.*

Pañcatattva

Same as *Pañcamakára* (q.v.).

Pañcáyatani diksá

Initiation into the cults of Siva, Sakti, Visnu, Súrya and Ganesa.

Krsnananda's *tantrasára,*

Pañcopácra

Five articles for worship, viz., *gandha* (sandal-paste and other fragrant substances), *puspa* (flower), *dhúpa* (incense), *dipa* (lamp), *naivedya* (food offering), *Purascaryarnava,*

Parakìyá

Wife of another person, sometimes taken by a devotee as his partner.

Paralinga

(1) Imaginary male organ in terms of which the *Bindu* or vacuum in the *Sahasrára* triangle in conceived.

(2) A type of *Sivalinga.*

Paramahamsa

A devotee who has succeeded in *Hamsa-mantra.*

Paramakula

Same as Àjñá (q.v.).

Paramesthi Guru

The fourth spiritual ancestor of the *guru.*

Mahánirvána,

Páramitá

Perfection, transcendental virtue. Generally six or ten; viz., *Dama, Sila, Ksanti, Virya, Dhyana, Prajna.* To these are, sometimes, added *Satya, Adhi-sthana, Maitra, Upeksa.*

Paramudra

Subtle form of *Mudra.*

Tantraraja,

Parapara Guru

Third spiritual ancestor of the *guru.*

Mahánirvána,

Pará Sakti

(1) Supreme Goddess. An aspect of Mother Goddess.

(2) Female partner of the tantric *Sádhaka. Sáradátilaka,* 1.7 (Comm.). *Nityá-sádasikárnava,*

Mahánirvána, V. 2.

Kulárnava,

Satcakranirápana, L

(Kálicarana).

Pása

Same as *Mala* (q.v.).

Pasu

Anu. Jiva. That which is tied by *pásas* or fetters.

A man in whom animal propensities are predominant.

Regarded as the weakest type of human beings.

A low class of Tántric devotees.

Twofold — *sabhava* (influenced by knowledge) and *vibháva* (with a mark left by knowledge). A *pasu* may again be *diksita* (initiated) or *adiksita* (uninitiated).

Pásupatasútra,

Kaulávalìnirnaya,

Nilatantra, VIII.

Pasubháva

The attitude of a *Pasu* (q.v.).

Rudrayamala, Uttara,

Pasucakra

A kind of *Cakra* ritual.

Niruttara,

Pasu Sástra

Tantras other than those belonging to the *Kaula* group.

Pasvácára

General name of *Vedácára, Vaisnavácára, Saivácara* and *Daksinácára.*

Pasyanti

Belonging to the region of the navel, it is the second stage of the development of sound within the body.

Prapañcasára,

Paustika

A rite designed to cause prosperity.

Nilatantra, XII. 26.

Pindabrahmánda-márga

Passage of the ascent of *Kundalini* (q.v.).

Piñgalá

One of the three principal arteries — rising from *Múládhára* and reaching the right nostril.

Possesses the characteristics of the Sun, it is also called *Súryanádi.*

Sáradátilaka,

(Comm. of Rághava).

Satcakranirúpana I (*Sammohana Tantra* quoted in Kalicarana's comm.).

Pir (Persian)

Guru or spiritual preceptor, according to Sufis.

Pranava

The Vedic syllable *Om.*

Pránáyáma

Lit. the expansion of breath; a breathing exercise.

It is of three kinds, viz.,

Púraka (inhalation),

Kumbhaka (holding the breath),

Recaka (exhalation),

Nilatantra,

Pránatosini,

Pratyáhára

Yogic process of withdrawing the senses from their contact with external objects.

Pratyalìdha

A sitting posture in which the shooter has the left knee advanced and the right leg slightly bent and retracted.

Nilatantra,

Prthvibija

The letters *LA.*

Púraka

A process of *pránáyáma* (q.v.).

Pútha

A holy place in which a limb of the severed body of Sati (Siva's consort) is supposed to have fallen.

Nilatantra,

Pitha means a place where a devotee of high order used to live or seat on which such a devotee attained *Siddhi.* Generally 51 *Pithas* are recognised. Of these, quite a few are in Bengal or in neighboring areas.

Pithanyása

See *Nyása.*

Pithasakti

Collective name of goddesses *Icchá, Jñána,* etc., each representing an aspect of Sakti.

Syámárahasya,

Pradhána-tattva

Equilibrium of the felling of joy or Sorrow.

Prákámya

A kind of *Siddhi* (q.v.).

Prakrti

(1) Sakti, one's female partner in a Tántric rite.

(2) Female Principle of creation.

(3) The Supreme Sakti according to the Sáktas.

Nilatantra,

Purascarana

A Tántric rite designed to cause the potency of a *mantra.* It generally consists of ten parts, viz., *japa, homa, tarpana, abhiseka, aghamarsana, súryárghya, jalpana, pranáma, pújá, bráhma-nabhojana.*

In it, the person concerned has to take *havisyánna* (q.v.) and *pañcagavya* (q.v.).

Kauḷávalinirnaya,

Nilatantra,

It may consists of five parts also, viz., *Japa, Homa, Tarpana, Abhiseka, Bráhmanabhojana.*

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Púrnábhiseka

Highest form of *Abhiseka* (q.v.).

Purusa-Prakrti

Male and Female Principles of creation.

Puryastaka

Five kinds, viz.,

Para (flowers made of jewels, etc.),

Apara (made with cut pieces of variegated cloth),

Uttama (obtained from plants),

Madhyama (fruits),

Adama (leaves, water).

Putita

A *mantra* in between two *Bijas,* one in the beginning, another at the end.

Nìlatantra,

Putìkrta

Same as *putita* (q.v.).

Rahasya Yogini

Eight presiding deities of the *Astakona Cakra* (q.v.).

Gandharva,

Rajácakra

A form of *Cakra* worship.

In it, mother, sister, daughter, dauther-in-law and preceptor's wife are looked upon as *Saktis.*

Niruttara,

Rajani

A special type of woman recommended for being worshipped in Tantric rituals.

Niruttara-tantra,

Rájayoga

A form of *yoga* in which the mind automatically merges in Brahman.

Pránatosinì,

Gheranda,

Rambhá

Designation of a woman of any of the four castes endowed with noble traits of character, eminently fit for Tántric rites.

Niruttara-tantra,

Rathakrántá

A vast stretch of land from the Vindhyas to Mahácina including Nepal. China was called Mahacina in the medieval period..

Recaka

A process of *pranayama* (q.v.).

Rìktá

Name of a *tithi* of evil influence.

Nilatantra,

Rudragranthi

A knot obstructing the ascent of *Kundalinì* (q.v.).

Lalitásahasranáma,

(*Saubhágyabháskara* comm.).

Sádi Vidyá

A branch of knowledge, so named after the initial letter of the *Sakti Bija.*

Sahaja

(1) The easiest and most natural way of spiritual exercise.

(2) Ultimate reality according to the *Sahajiyás* or adherents of the *Sahaja* doctrine.

Sahasrára

Thousand-petalled multicoloured lotus supposed to exist in *Brahmarandhra* (q.v.).

Satcakranirúpana,

Nìlatantra,

Saivácára

A form of *Daksinácára* emphasising the cult of Siva-Sakti.

Vedic mode, eightfold Yogic practices and animal sacrifice; these are the characteristics of this *Àcára.*

Pranatosini,

Sákinì

Presiding Goddess of the *Visuddha Cakra* (q.v.).

Satcakranirupana,

(Kálìcarana's comm.).

Sákteyì

A kind of *Diksá* (q.v.).

Sáktì

(1) The *Bija Hrim.*

(2) The female partner of a Tantric *Sádhaka.*

Of three kinds, viz.,

Svakiya (own wife),

Parakiyá (another man's wife),

Sadharani (prostitute).

(3) Female principle of creation.

(4) A limb of *Mantra.*

Kulárnava,

Niruttara,

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasara,*

Gandharva,

Pránatosini,

Nilatantra,

Srividyaratnasutra,

(*Dipika* comm.).

Saktibija

HRIM.

Sakticakra

Name of the five Sakti triangles in *Sriyantra* (q.v.).

Saundaryalahari

(Laksmidhara's comm. citing *Bhairavayámala*).

Sakticálani

A *mudrá* causing great success. By it the breath is held up by *Kumbhaka.* The wind so confined pushes *Kundalini*upward.

Sáktidiksá

Initiation based on pure knowledge, in which there is no external rite. *Sáradátilaka,* (Rághavabhatta).

Pránatosini

Sakti-káranaváda

The doctrine that Sakti is both the efficient and material cause of the universe.

Nityásodasikárnava,

Saktisamgama, Tárá,

Saundaryalaharì,

Kaulamárgarahasya,

Lalitásahasranáma,

Saktipata

Touch of the lustre of Siva, by which even a man of no strength can realise *Cit.*

Saktitrikona

Sakti triangles conceived as existing in different parts of the body, the three lines of a triangle symbolising

any set of three theories, and the angles supposed to be presided over by different goddesses.

Saktivarna

Vowels.

Sáradátilaka,

Samádhi

An accessory of *Yoga.* State of intense concentration and bliss, in which the world of sense disappears. It is of two kinds, *Savikalpa* (q.v.) and *Nirvikala* (q.v.) which are also called *Samprajñáta* and *Asamprajñáta,* respectively.

Gheranda,

Gandharva, Kulárnava,

Sámarasya

Equilibrium of Siva and Sakti (of *Upaya* and *Prajñá* in Buddhism), often conceived in sexual terms, the complete comprehension of which leads to the perception of non-duality.

Samaya (Pújá)

Worship in and by the mind.

Samáyácára

A mode of the *Srividyá* cult.

Saundaryalaharì,

(Laksmìdhara's comm.),

(*Saubhágyabháskara* comm.).

Parasuráma-kalpasútra, (Ramesvara's comm.).

Sámbhavi diksá

A form of initiation of a superior level done by the mere touch, glance or will of the *guru.*

Related to the secret cult of *Kamesvari. Nityotsava,*

Samháracakra

A part of

Navacakra (q.v.).

Nityásodasikarnava, I.

Sampradayayogini

See under *Caturdasára.*

Samprajñáta Samadhi

See *Samádhi.*

Samputa

The desired *mantra,* recited before and after the name of the *Sádhya* (i.e., one against whom any of the six malevolent rites is performed).

Nilatantra,

Samskára

Sacrament, usually 10, prescribed for the three upper classes of the Bráhmanical society.

Sánta-Sakti

A form of *Sakti* containing will (*icchá*), knowledge (*Jñána*) and action (*kriyá*).

Sántibìja

Svaha.

Sastra

Syallable *Phat.*

Satcakrabheda

Same as *Cakrabheda* (q.v.).

Satcakramarga

Same as *Pindabrahmandamarga* (q.v.).

Satkarma

Six acts calculated to do harm to an enemy:

Márana (killing),

Stambhana (causing paralysis),

Uccátana (exzplusion), *Vasikarana* (bringing others under control),

Vidvesana (creating bad blood)

and *Sánti* (pacification).

Nilatantra,

Savikalpa Samádhi

A state of perfect concentration and bliss in which a feeling of difference exists between the knower and the objects of knowledge.

Sávitri

Mantra called

Gayatri (q.v.).

Nilatantra,

Setu

(1) Designation of a *mantra* recited before *japa* after the worship of *Mahávidyá*. So called as it is believed to be like a bridge for crossing the ocean of suffering. According to *Tantrasára, Omkára* proceeds a *mantra*. According to *Pranatosini, Pranava* (*Omkára*) is called *Setu* for Brahmanas and Ksatriyas. For vaisyas *Phat* is *Setu*.

(2) Fourteen vowels followed by *anusvára* and *náda*.

Purascaryárnava,

Nilatantra,

Siddha Vidyá

Same as *Mahávidyá* (q.v.).

Siddhántácárá

A form of *Vámácara*, designed for devotees of the *Vira* type.

It lays greater stress on *antar-yága* than on external rites.

Its adherents worship Visnu by day while resorting to *panmcamakara* at night.

Siddhaugha

A line of succession of Tantric *gurus*.

Siddhi

Mystical power. Supposed to be eight, viz., *Animá* (assuming a very small form), *Laghimá* (making the body very light), *Prápti* (power of obtaining anything), *Prakamya* (irresistible will), *Mahima* (increasing one's size at will), *Isitva* (superiority, greatness), *Vasitva* (bringing others under control), *Kamavasayta* (suppression of passion).

Sometimes the number is given as ten, with the addition of *Bhuktisiddhi, Icchásiddhi*.

Sivabija

Name of mercury.

Siva Cakra

The four Siva triangles making the *Sriyantra* (q.v.).

Binducakra, Astadala-padma, Bhúpura, etc., are also called *Sivacakra*.

Saundaryalahari,

(Laksmidhara's comm.).

Smárti diksá

Initiation of the disciple in his absence. In it, the preceptor mentally renders the neophyte free from the threefold impurity of *ánava, kárma* and *máyiya* types, and elevates his soul so as to enable it to be united with the Supreme Being.

Sáradátilaka,

(Rághava's comm.).

Sodasadala-padma

Sixteen-petalled lotus a, each petal of which has a vowel representing a *Mátrká*.

Sodasopacára

Sixteen articles for worship; *ásana, svágata, pádya, árghya, ácamaniya, madhuparka, puna-racamaniya, snaniya, vasana, bhúsana, gandha, puspa, dhúpa, dipa, naivedya, vandana.*

Mahánirvána,

Sodhányása

A form of *Nyása* in which the deities are individualy perceived in the body. It has six methods.

Tárábhakti-sudhárnáva,

Saradatilaka,

Krsnananda's *Tantrasara,*

Sonitapuspa

Same as *Játakusuma* (q.v.).

Nilatantra,

Sparsa (Sparsani) dìksá

Initiation of the disciple by the touch of the *guru.*

Kulárnava,

Sáradátilaka,(Rághava's comm.).

Sricakra

See *Sriyantra.*

Srikula

A prominent Tantric school of which texts like *Tripurárahasya, Prapañcasara, Saradatilaka,* etc., belong.

Srividyá

(1) Mahávidyá.

(2) A particular *mantra.*

Sriyantra

The most important diagram relating to the cult of *Srividyá.*

Also called *Sricakra* and *Tripuracakra.*

It contains 9 triangles or *Yonis,* five connected with Sakti and four with Siva, the former turned upward and the latter downward.

Nityásodasikárnava,

Kámakalávilása,

Saundaryalahari, (Laksmidhara's comm.).

Srota

See *Daksina Srota.*

Madhyama Srota.

Srsticakra

One-third of *Srìyantra,* representing the creative aspect of Sakti.

Setubandha comm. on *Nityásodasikarnava.*

Stambhana

One of the six Tántric rites, rendering the efforts of the enemy abortive or causing paralysis to his body.

Sáradátilaka

Sthúladeha

Gross body.

Sthúla Dhyána

Meditation based on an object like the image of the deity concerned.

Strivarna

Long vowels.

Sáradátilaka,

(comm.).

Suddhatattva

Paramasiva.

Suddhavidyá

Knowledge of *Tattvas.*

That which imparts the knowledge of Siva.

Suddhi

Designation of meat, fish, *Mudrá,* fruits, roots, etc., offered while offering wine to the goddess.

Pañcamakáras (q.v.) are also called *Suddhi.*

Sáksmadeha

Subtle body.

Sulabija

The mystic sound *Phat.*

Súnyatá

Void or vacuity conceived in terms of the Female Principle.

Súrya Nádi

Another name of *Pingalá* (q.v.).

Susumná

A *Nádi* supposed to exist between *Ida* and *Pingala.*

Also called *Brahmanadi* or *Bhahmavartman.*

It extends from *Múládhára* (q.v.) to *Brahmarandhra* (q.v.).

Through it *Kundalini* ascends.

Svacchanda

Independent. Siva.

Svádhisthána

Name of a *Cakra* within the body, supposed to be located above *Múládhára.* It looks like a six-petalled lotus.

Satcakranirúpana,

(Laksmidhara's comm.).

Nilatantra,

Satcakranirupana,

Nilatantra,

Svakiyá

Wife of the devotee as his partner in *Sádhana.*

Svapuspa

The first menstrual blood of a married woman, sacred to Goddess.

Svayambhu Kusuma

Menstrual blood of a maiden.

Nilatantra,

Tádana

Processing of a *mantra.* Each letter of it is recited 10 or 100 times.

Tádana is done also by writing the letters and sprinkling water of sandal wood over them.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Taijasa Varna

Àgneya Varna, i.e., *I, I, Ai, Kha, Cha, Tha, Tha, Pha, Ra, Ksa;* stated to have originated from *tejas* (heat).

Tamas

Atmábhimána.

Tanmátra

Subtle elements, viz., *sabda, sparsa, rúpa, rasa, gandha.*

Taoism

A school of Chinese thought according to which Mother Goddess represents Yin, i.e., the Female Principle underlying creation.

Tárábija

The mystic syllable *Kram.*

Tárásodhá

A kind of *Nyása* used in the worship of Tárá.

Nilatantra,

Tariqat

According to Sufis, the way of understanding the relation between God and the individual and with the material world.

Tárinimata

Same as *Khadimata* (q.v.).

Tarpana

(1) Libation of water of deities, sages and forefathers.

Krsnánanda's *Tantrasára,*

Mahánirvána,

(2) A method of processing *mantras.*

Tantrasára, op. cit.,

Nilatantra,

Tattvacakra

Same as *Divyacakra* (q.v.).

Tattvamudra

The top of the ring-finger joined with the tip of the right thumb.

Nilatantra,

Tejodhyaná

Same as *Jyotirdhyana* (q.v.).

Tha

An imitative sound, as if a metallic jar rolling down steps.

Trailokyamohana-cakra

A form of *Sricakra* or *Sriyantra* (q.v.).

Trikona

(1) The mystic syllable *em.*

(2) Triangle, also called *yoni,* necessary in Tantric worship. *Pará Sakti* or *Vák* is at the middle point. Three arms represents three forms of sound (*Pasyanti, Madhyamá, Vaikhari*), or, according to some Tantras, *Icchá* (desire), *Jñána* (knowledge) and *Kriya* (action). Three *Bijas,* three *Saktis,* three goddesses, three *Pithas,* and other concepts involving a triad. *Kundalini* is called *Mahátrikona.*

Kamakalavilasa,

Nityásodasikárnava (*Setubandha* comm.).

Parasuráma-kalpasútra,

Gandharva-tantra,

Tantraraja-tantra,

Trilinga

Three phallus-symbols of Siva, viz., *Bána, Hara, Para.*

Tripitha

Collective name of Kámarúpa, Púrnagiri and Jalandhara Pithas.

Kámakalávilasa,

Tripuracakra

Same as *Sricakra* or *Sriyantra* (q.v.).

Tripurasundarimata

Name of *Hadimata* (q.v.).

Saktisamgama,

Turiya

(1) Highest state.

(2) A very high state. A field of knowledge, which is also known as *turiya,* is supposed to be contained in the *Sahasrara Cakra.*

Uccátana

One of the six malevolent rites, by which the expulsion or mental agitation of the enemy is ensured.

Sáradátilaka,

Unmana, Unamani

Sixth stage in spiritualn exercise. The devotee, in this stage, experiences great joy in which his sens-organs stop functioning.

Upacára

Articles for worship. These may range from five to sixty-four.

Sáradátilaka, (Rághava's comm.).

Krsnananda's *Tantrasára,*

Mahánirvana,

Upádánakárana

Material cause.

Ullása

Stages of Tántric *Sádhana,* viz., *Àrambha, Taruna, Yauvana, Praudha, Praudhánta, Unmana, Anavastha.*

Parasurama-kalpasútra,

Upámsu

Japa in a very low voice so that it cannot be heared.

Uttarácára

The way shown by Vedic injunction and the *Guru* who is *Jivanmukta.*

Uttarakaula

A sect of *Kaula* worshippers.

Saundaryalahari,

Uttaramnaya

Northern zone of Tantra culture.

Vacika (Vak) diksa

The form of initiation with *mantra.*

Saradatilaka, (Raghava's comm.).

Vadhubija

STRIM.

Nilatantra,

Vagbháva

It denotes *bija,* and is also the name of a triangle.

Vahnijaya

Svaha.

Nilatantra,

Váikhari

One of the four kinds of sounds. Carried by the wind inside the body, it is articulated in the throat as sentences.

Saradatilaka, 1.1 (Comm.).

Nityasodasikarnava, (*Setubandha* comm.).

Vaisnavácára

A way of *Sádhana* to be followed by a Tantric devotee.

Nilatantra,

Vajra

(1) Thunderbolt, a weapon often found in the hands of the Tantric Buddhist images.

(2) Diamond.

Vajrapuspa

Diamond flower, valuable flower, the blossom of sesamum.

Nilatantra,

Vajrayana

A form of Tantric Buddhism.

Vák-diksá

See *Vácikì Dìksá.*

Vámácára

A Tántric way of *Sádhana.* Followers of it resort to *Pñaca-makára.*

Saktisamgama, Tárá I. 90 ff. Sakti is worshipped as a personification of Siva's wife. According to some, a rite in which a woman, who is placed on the left of the man, plays an important part, or is a crooked way practised secretly. *Váma* is of kinds, *Madhyama* in which all the five *Makáras* are resorted to, and *Uttama* in which *Madya, Maithuna* and *Mudrá* are used.

Vámamárga

Sáme as *Vámácára* (q.v.).

Varna (mayi) Dìksá

The form of initiation in which the spirit of letters is infused into the different parts of the disciple's body.

Sáradátilaka,

Vasikarana

One of the six black rites by which a person is brought

under control.

Saradatilaka,

Vedácára

A mode of *Sádhana.* In it Vedic way is followed.

Pránatosini,

Vedha (mayi) diksá

Same as *Manodìksá* (q.v.).

Vesyá

For technical meaning in Tantra, see our observations in connexion with position of women in Tantra

Vibháva

See under *Pasu.*

Videvasana

A black rite by which animosity is created between persons.

Vidyá

(1) True knowledge.

(2) Female deity.

(3) *Mantra* relating to a female deity.

(4) Female partner of a Tantric *Sádhaka.*

Nilatantra,

Vilása

A principal Tantric school.

Vira

A Tántric *Sádhaka* of the second grade, who has advanced mental faculties, and follows

Virácára (q.v.).

Kulárnava,

Rudrayámala, Uttara,

Parasuráma-kalpasútra,

Nirvántantra,

Kámákhyátantra,

Niruttara,

Saktisamgama, Sundari,

Pránatosini,

Virabhava

A particular attitude of a Tántric *Sádhaka.*

Viracakra

A *cakra* ritual in which five Saktis, viz., mother (*Bhumindra-kanyá*), daughter (*Rajakisuta*), sister (*Svapaci*), daughter-in-law (*Kapáli*) and wife (*Yogini*) are worshipped.

Niruttara,

Virácára

A way of Sádhana to be followed by a Tántric devotee.

Virasádhana

Sádhana practised by a *Vira* type of devotee.

Virásana

Sitting posture in which one rests the body on the heels.

Visarga

It represents both *Pará* and *Apará* aspects of the Sakti.

Also called *Kaulika Sakti,* it is the Female Principle (*sah*) as complementary to the Male Principle (*ham*), *Bindu. Tantra-loka,* III. 120 ff., *Satcakrani-rúpana,* XL-III (Kálicarana's comm. quoting *Praspañcasára*).

Visnugranthi

A knot in the *Anáhata Cakra* (q.v.) which *Kundalini* has to penetrate in its ascent.

Visnukrántá

The tract of land extending from the Vindhyas to Cattala (Chittangong in Bangladesh) or, according to some, to Java in the Far East.

Visuddha

One of the six *Cakras,* above the *Anahata* (q.v.) in the region of the neck. Supposed to look like a sixteen-petalled lotus. Seat of Sarasvati.

Satcakranirúpana,

Vitarka

Reflection like this — I am Siva Himself.

Vyápaka-nyása

See *Vyápaka-traya.*

Nilatantra,

Vyápakatraya

A kind of *Nyása.* The three are :

1. Touching the head and foot with the hand.
2. From foot to head.
3. From head to foot.

Nilatantra,

Yámala

Literally meaning 'pair', 'couple'.

Yang

The Male Principle in Chinese philosophy.

Yantra

Diagram, geometrical figure, painted with various colours at the time of worship. The worshipper imagines that the deity, being worshipped for the time being, resides in the diagram. Diagrams differ according to the forms of the deities worshipped. Variously interpreted as

instrument, the body and abode of a deity, amulet, mental faculty, pure consciousness, doctrinal, niceties, microcosm of human body, etc.

Gandharva,

Kularnava,

Saktisamgama, Tara,.

Krsnananda's *Tantrasara,*

Saundaryalahari.

Nilatantra,

Yantrapuspa

Flowers like *Javá, Aparajita, Rakrakarvira,* etc.

Nilatantra,

Yaugi diksá

A form of initiation. In it, the *guru,* in a subtle form, enters the body of his disciple and identifies his personality with that of the disciple.

Sáradátilaka,

Yin

The Female Principle in Chinese philosophy.

Yogini

(1) A class of goddesses, 64 in number, believed to be manifestations of the eight *Mátrkás.*

(2) Female partner of the *Sádhaka.*

(3) Goddesses presiding over the *Cakras.*

(4) Name of a Tantric school.

(5) A class of Female ascetics spreading knowledge among the masses.

(6) Medicine woman.

(7) Woman possessed by the goddess.

Yoni

(1) Diagram resembling the female organ.

Nilatantra,

(2) Fourfold Sakti, viz., *Ambá, Jyesthá, Raudri, Vámá.*

(3) Female organ. See *Gauri-pitha.*

Yonimudra

(1) A finger-pose looking like the female organ.

(2) A posture of the body, in which the devotee fixes his anus on his left heel, tongue on the palate, and eyes on the tip of the nose. It is supposed to rouse *Kundalini.*

Pranatosini,

Sáradátilaka, (Quotation from *Bhútasuddhi-tantra*).

Nilatantra,

Yonipuspa

Black *Aparájitá* flower symboling sexual intercourse.

Purasuráma-kalpasútra,

Yoniyugma

A triangle with its apex upward intersecting a triangle with its apex downward.

Nilatantra,

Yuganaddha

Male Principle united with Female Principle, a motif often represented in Tántric Buddhist art.

The non-dual state of unity of *Súnyatá* and *Karuná.*

Sádhanamálá,